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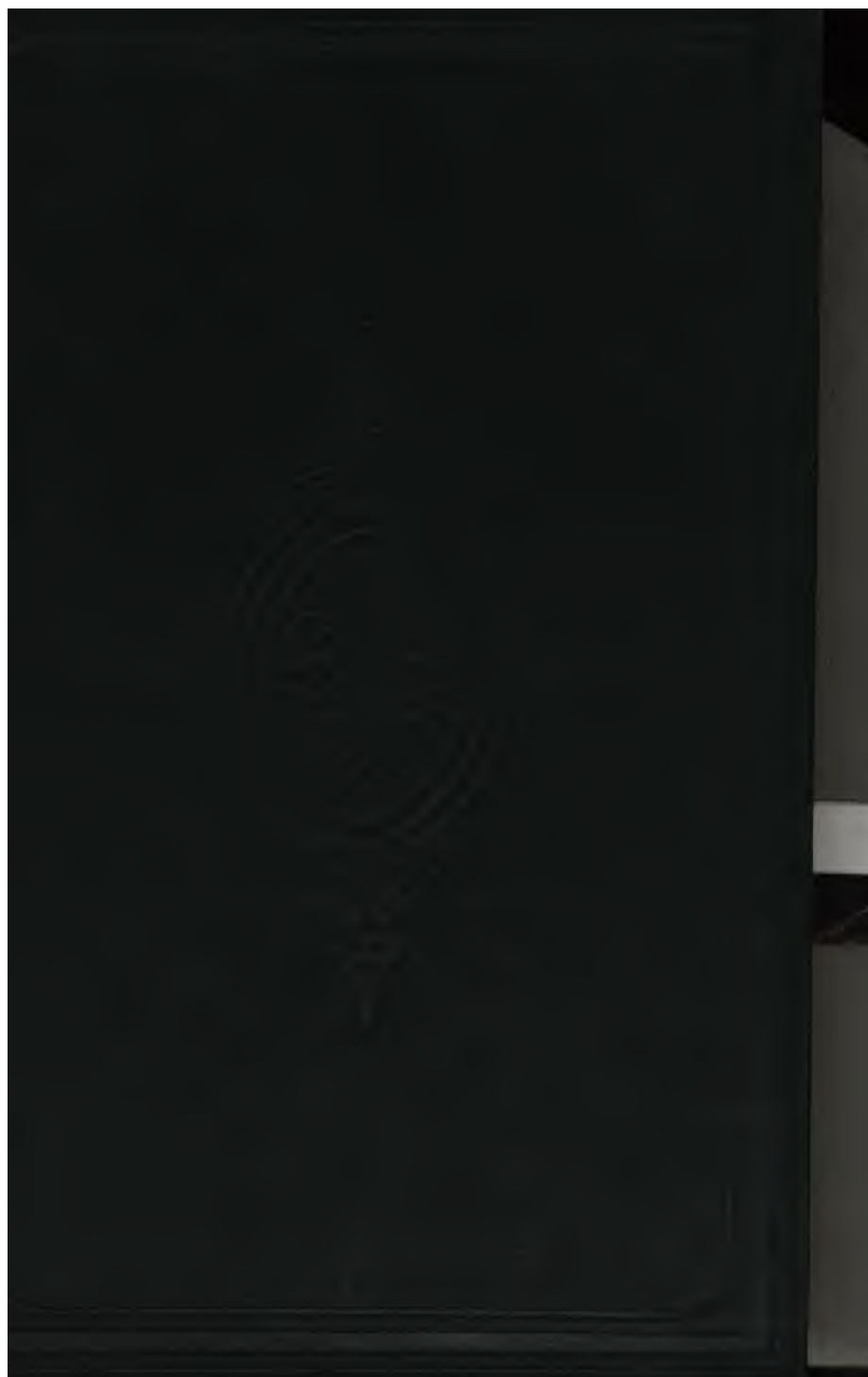
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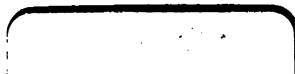
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HOW I ROSE IN THE WORLD

A NOVEL



IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

LONDON:

CHARLES J. SKEET, 10, KING WILLIAM STREET

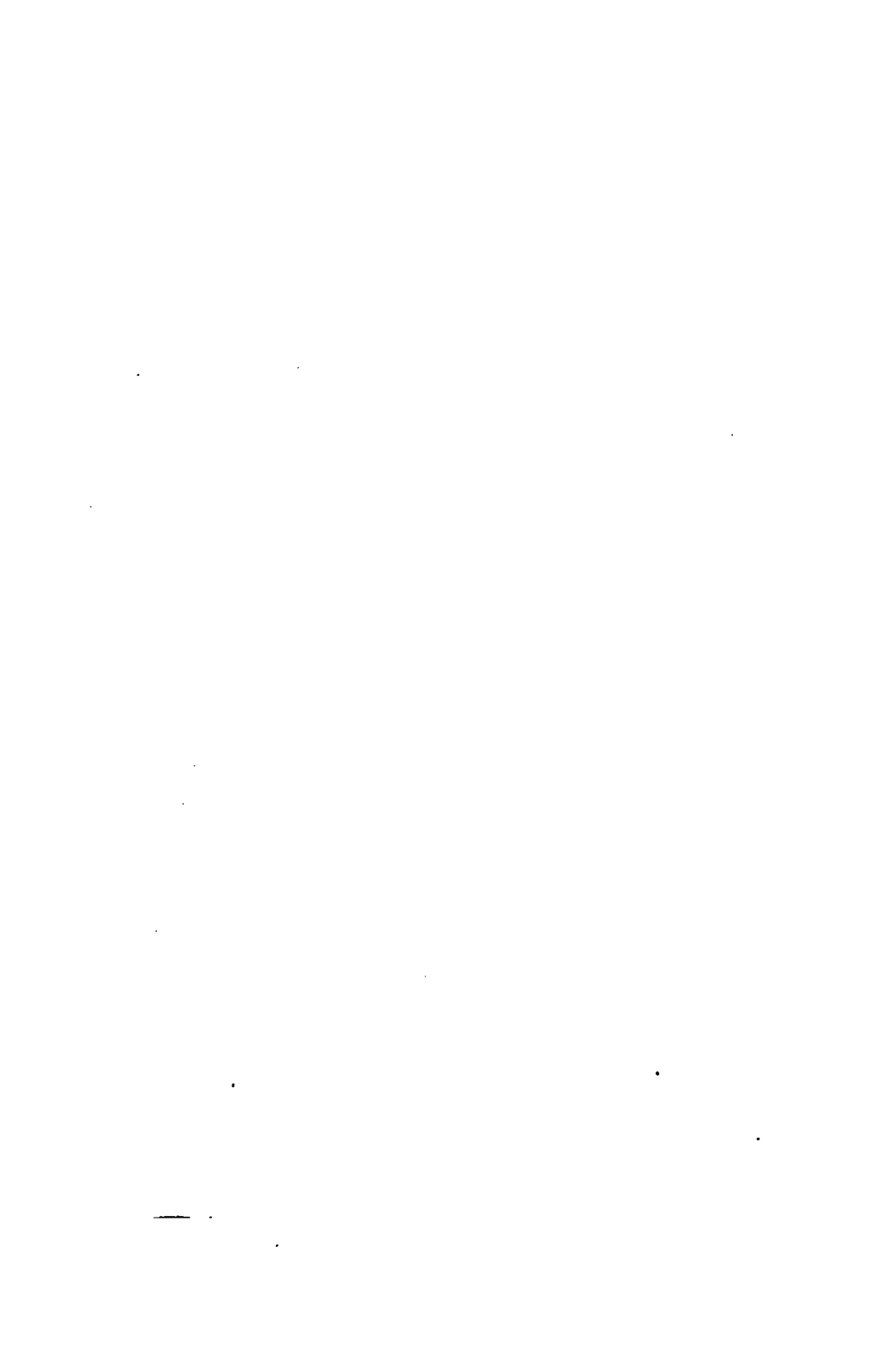
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HOW I ROSE IN THE WORLD.

CHAPTER I.

A LITTLE ABOUT MYSELF AND OTHERS.

I NOW watched Jackson more closely, and perceived a visible change in him. He had become thoughtful and moody; seldom spoke, was often absent from his meals under the plea of illness, and kept his room in the evenings, I *believe* (for *I* was now an *extern*, and lived with Stephen and Mrs. O'Leary), as much as possible. I often sought his company and his confidence, fearing that already he might have got into difficulties; but he always repelled my advances, and expressed a desire to be left alone. His face grew sharp, pale, and anxious, his eyes restless, his dress disordered and neglected, and his whole appearance bespoke a man whose mind was ill at ease. When I spoke to him he answered shortly and fretfully, and at

all times evinced a dislike to be questioned on any subject. I pitied, and would have counselled him, but how was this to be done when he so studiously avoided me? I tried, therefore, to comfort myself with the assurance that Marston would, for my sake, warn him of the danger of a gambling-house, and perhaps save him.

But time speeds on. Graham is often with me and we walk together, and talk a good deal of my stepfather; but he never once alluded to the approaching marriage of his cousin with Stephen Dorricks. I observe that this young gentleman (Graham) has latterly become very fond of the society of the Loaders, more particularly of little Fanny, now, contrary to everybody's expectations, greatly improved in health, but still having an unconquerable dislike to Dorricks. He (Graham again) brings her books, and fruits, and flowers, and tells her all the little gossip of the day, just as I used to do when I was happier, and he is as gentle with her as if she was a pet lamb.

I really am not sure whether I told my readers that Stephen was now regularly employed upon

a "sporting and theatrical," paper in the metropolis, and that he was also special correspondent to the *Dublin Freeman* and the *Galway Vindicator*. He had just severed connection with a weekly journal of some repute, because it abused his old friend "Harry Lorrequer," of whom he was a most ardent admirer, though by so doing he lost five-and-thirty shillings per week. But money was nothing with O'Leary when a friend's reputation was at stake. I do not know the precise sums he received for his services on these journals, but the aggregate would probably amount to thirty pounds a month; and this sum enabled him to cut a very pretty figure in Piccadilly, Regent Street, and the Burlington Arcade, as well as at the theatres, opera-houses, and other places of amusement. This will account for our not having been so much together latterly as we could have desired. He was now a man of business, and business, we all know, must be attended to. How I loved to see him dress for the opera stalls, or the boxes of Drury Lane or the Haymarket, and think them both honoured by having within their walls the

very *beau ideal* of an Irish gentleman. And the manager, the singer, and the poor, struggling, worn-out actor idolised him, for he had a good word for all. He never dipped his pen in gall. If he erred at all, he erred on the side of humanity; as I wish some modern critics would do.

Nor were the "minors" forgotten. He liked the "burlesque" of the Strand, the melodrama of the Queen's, and the drama of the Surrey. Years later he pronounced the acting in the latter theatre, "positively superb," where Messrs. Shepherd, Andersen, Fernandez, and the ever-versatile, indefatigable, and ubiquitous Charlie Butler (and long may all four keep possession of its "boards"), were a host in themselves. Whether Mr. Shepherd will send me a *carte blanche* on satin note for thus chronicling Stephen's opinion of his actors I do not know—but I really think he ought.

I lost no time in telling Mr. and Mrs. O'Leary all I myself knew with reference to the proposed marriage between Eveleen and Dorricks. They heard me to the end, and then the former, throw-

ing himself back in his chair, and crossing his right leg over his left knee—something in the style of an amateur tailor—delivered himself thus:—

“When a girl marries, she usually does so with an object. That object may be apparent, or it may not. For instance, she may appear to marry a man for love whom she really hates, and her intended husband may be perfectly aware, or perfectly unaware, of the sacrifice she is about to make. In a word, she may marry for money and break her heart. Again, she may marry really and truly for love, and for this alone I assume that all right thinking girls should marry; or she may do so to oblige her parents, or friends, or guardians, under a strong protest, and with the express understanding that she is to be miserable for life. Thus we have divided the case, as you will perceive, and placed it under three distinct heads. Now to take them up and examine them *seriatim*.

“And, firstly—‘A girl may marry for money.’ Now it is perfectly obvious to everybody who possesses the very smallest modicum of common

sense that Miss Roberts *does* not, and *need* not, marry for money, as her father is wealthy almost beyond his desires, and can at any moment give her a fortune that would nearly make a Rothschild stare.

"Secondly—Miss R. does not appear to exhibit any of the ordinary or extraordinary signs of attachment for Mr. Dorricks, such as I should desire to see in a woman who was about to become *my* wife, Ergo, she does not love him. Why does she marry then? And this brings me to the third point.

"Adhering to the theorem, I draw my deduction thus. She does not marry for money—see does not marry for love; and she marries, therefore, for the third, last, and in many instances most conclusive of all reasons—because her father wishes it."

"What a logican you are, to be sure!" said my aunt, admiringly.

"I wonder you didn't see the thing yourself, Biddy] Believe me, Miss Roberts does not care a fig for Dorricks, good and handsome, as he is; and

if you had only half the penetration I always gave you credit for, you'd have seen that before now."

"Perhaps you're right!" and poor Biddy mused.

"To be sure I'm right, and were it not for this Dorricks, whom the devil confound, I could tell you both a tale; but never mind, all in good time." And Stephen tapped his nails against the window, and began to whistle most vigorously.

This was the way in which my uncle dealt with the subject.

The day approached on which, in the sight of God and man, Stephen Dorricks and Eveleen Roberts was to be declared man and wife. For three weeks at least I saw nothing of either. Eveleen was slightly indisposed and confined to her room, and Dorricks was in Wales, arranging some private affairs previous to his marriage. Mr. Roberts was, of course, very busy, and could not be approached; and Mrs. Roberts seemed, for the first time in her life, to avoid me.

When Dorricks returned, he looked sad and depressed; but this depression wore off, and in a day or two he seemed as calm and self-collected as ever.

At length I saw Eveleen! It was in the summer-house in the Old Kent-road, and she was sitting with a book lying carelessly before her, her fair head resting upon her hand, and her hair thrown wildly back upon her neck and shoulders. She was evidently weeping, as deep sobs burst at intervals from her labouring bosom.

I had gone into the garden accidentally, and without the slightest hope of seeing her, and the pale, sickly, worn face, which I for an instant caught sight of, pained me beyond expression. I was not three yards from her—she might have heard my very breathing, but she neither stirred nor looked up.

“Shall I speak to her?” I asked myself. “I will, though it be for the last time.”

Closer, and closer, till I could have touched her with a finger, but still she stirred not.

Her head was now bowed upon the book, and its open leaves were wet and discoloured as if with tears. Her hair in disorder upon her neck, bosom, and arms, and I saw that one golden ringlet had been severed from near the temple, and lay upon

the rustic seat beside her. A portrait, slightly injured, rested on the table. The portrait was that of Stephen Dorricks.

"Miss Roberts," said I, after the lapse of some minutes; "dear Miss Roberts, I wish to speak to you."

She looked up, surprised and alarmed.

"Forgive me," I continued, "if I have disturbed you; but I feared you were ill."

"How long have you been here?" she asked, hurriedly and anxiously.

"About ten minutes," I answered,

"Not longer?"

"Not longer."

She raised her dim eyes to mine.

"I am glad of it," she said quietly.

"Miss Roberts," I continued, with an effort, "hear me a few words—the last I shall in all probability address to you under your present name."

Her hand passed instinctively over Dorrick's portrait, but she did not speak.

"Five or six years ago, I was received into your father's counting-house."

"I know it," she interrupted faintly; "I know it."

"A poor helpless orphan," I went on, "with scarce a friend to whom I could turn for help or counsel. I was almost alone in the world; a mere child, scarce fitted for the every-day work of life, and without the slightest knowledge of business of any kind whatever. Mr. Roberts received me on my own terms, and those terms were, that I should labour for my own bread, and never eat that of idleness. I tried to do well, and was encouraged on every side. What I had done was remembered: what I had failed to accomplish was overlooked and forgotten. I was gently dealt with, and task-master was but a name. Well, manhood came upon me, and found me in a position which I had hardly dared to aspire to; a position of trust, of confidence, and emolument. With all this you will say that I am, or ought to be, happy."

"And are you not?" she asked, quickly.

"Far from it; I am really unhappy, and it is that very unhappiness that has forced me to address you this evening."

"Me?"

"Forgive me if I offend, but I feel as if *you* were not happy, either; as if some hidden grief were consuming you; some canker-worm gnawing at your heart. Oh, it is sad to see one so young, so good, so gentle—"

"Hush!" said she, with vehemence, and tightening her fingers upon the portrait—"hush! I am not unhappy."

"Would that I were so persuaded," I returned earnestly; "but your looks sadly belie your assertion. Miss Roberts, can you wonder if I doubt you when I see those tears which now struggle to your eyes, and almost witness the mighty conflict which shakes you in every limb?"

"I am but poorly," said she with a faint smile, "and very weak and nervous. I am afraid you startled me a little just now, and I have not yet quite recovered."

"You would deceive me, Miss Roberts—you would deceive yourself. You are ill, but it is your unhappiness, and that alone, which makes you so. Pardon my plain speaking and presumption."

"Presumption! Oh, Mr. Allen."

"If it be either or both, believe me that it springs from the undying devotion of one who would gladly lay down his life to spare you a single pang."

Again she nervously clutched the portrait, and I went on—

"You are too young and helpless to bear this burthen, whatever it may be, alone! Let me entreat you, then, as you value your future peace, to confide in your father and Mrs. Roberts. They are your natural guardians, and will give you advice and assistance, where such is necessary."

Tighter, and tighter, and tighter, was the portrait clutched, till the knuckles seemed starting through the transparent skin, and the finger-nails deeply imbedded in the flesh.

"Your father loves you," I continued; "you are to him as the apple of his eye. Will you repay his love by withholding from him your confidence—suffer on (for I know you *do* suffer) in secret and in silence, when his willing ear is always open to hear you, and his strong arm ever

ready to help? I know I have no right to speak in this way, and perhaps you are angry at my—”

“I am not angry,” she said, in low, broken tones; “oh, believe me I am not.”

“You have many friends, Miss Roberts, who are deeply and devotedly attached to you, and who hope to see you one day a happy wife and—”

A cry, a low, agonising cry burst from her lips, and the portrait, shattered into fifty pieces, lay at her feet.

“Great God!” I exclaimed in horror; “what have I done? Miss Roberts—dear, dear Miss Roberts, listen to me—speak to me! I call heaven and earth to witness I did not mean to pain you; but I spoke at random, and without well knowing what I said. Do you forgive me?”

“There is nothing to forgive,” she replied, after a pause of a few moments, during which I knew that some mighty struggle was going on within her: “nothing. You have spoken kindly to me, Mr. Allen, and I am grateful, very grateful.”

She spoke sadly and wearily, like one who was tired of life.

● "I have acted injudiciously, perhaps unwisely, Miss Roberts; but my motive was a good one."

"Yes, yes," she murmured, in the same sad, weary way; "do not speak of it again."

"I have been thinking of leaving this country," I said, with some emotion, "and—"

"Leaving this country!" she repeated, looking up earnestly and anxiously into my face; "leaving this country—why?"

"I have been unwell, latterly; my health is failing; rest and change are becoming necessary."

"Have you told my father?"

"Not yet; he has been so busy lately, that I have only been able to catch a passing glimpse of him."

"He will miss you," said she, slowly; "we shall all miss you."

"I shall miss what has been my home for so many years, Miss Roberts."

"And where do you go?"

"I hardly know yet,—perhaps to America."

"A long, long way for one that has never been out of England. An unhealthy climate, too, I fear."

"All climates are alike to me, now," I returned. Again she looked at me earnestly, and I saw her foot press a fragment of Dorrick's picture, deep, deep into the earth.

"You will not go for some time?"

"This week."

"This week? How sudden! Papa will never"—she stopped short, and her fingers played with the ringlet upon the table.

"He will not blame me when I tell him why I go."

"Indeed!"

"Believe me."

"And when will you return?"

"Never!"

Crack went the glass beneath her feet, and the remainder of the portrait disappeared.

"Never!" she repeated incredulously.

"Never, Miss Roberts! never!"

She wreathed that golden lock around her fingers, and again repeated, "Never!"

"Are you tired of the *old* world?" she at length asked with a smile!

"The old world is tired of me," I fear.

"Indeed, you are wrong Mr. Allen : we shall be very lonely without you. Every one thought well of you here, and I am sure papa looked upon you in the light of a valued friend. *True* friends are rare in this selfish world of ours, and we cannot afford to lose even one. Will you reconsider your decision?"

"It cannot be, Miss Roberts ; it is better for me, for everybody, that I should go : depend upon it the old world will get on without me."

"There is some mystery in all this," said she musingly ; "a mystery that I cannot unravel. Will you take the advice you have just given *me*, and consult my father?"

"It would be useless, Miss Eveleen—quite useless."

"Perhaps you are in pecuniary difficulties ; if so—"

"I do not owe any man a penny," I replied. "And my present income is more than sufficient for my wants."

She shook her head desparingly.

"I cannot understand it, Mr. Allen; but I suppose you are right."

"Believe me, I am."

"You would not do anything rashly, I am sure," she returned, "and must have strong motives for acting as you do."

I bowed.

"I could well wish it otherwise, and so could all who know you. You have some dear friends who will grieve for you in time to come, and who would gladly see you return to England again. For myself, how willingly would I comfort you if I could! Alas, I am but a poor weak woman, and have but a woman's prayers to give. These are freely yours."

"I thank you from my heart, Miss Roberts. The thought that I bear with me your wishes and prayers will help to lighten the load which now presses so heavily on me, and cast a ray of light along my darkened path."

"My own path is dark enough, God knows," she replied, with a shudder.

"*Yours!* I—pardon me, but—"

“Do not speak to me—do not make me think of what I *have been*, and what I *am*. I am not worthy to talk to you or any honest man, for oh, I hate—I despise myself!”

Again her head sank upon the table, and again her tears burst forth.

“Leave me,” she said hurriedly, “you will be observed. My father will be seeking for you, and you can make no excuse for your prolonged absence!”

“And Mr. Dorricks, Miss Roberts?”

“Is in the house, doubtless; but I cannot see him this evening—I am really unwell, and must be alone. Do not mention him again—do not mention anybody to me now—not even papa! Go!”

“Let me say, farewell, then, Miss Roberts, while there is yet time.”

“Oh, not yet! —not yet!” she cried, earnestly; “you cannot part us all so soon. Stay another month.”

“I dare not!”

“Not even when Eveleen asks you?”

“*When Eveleen asks you!*” What new light is this that bursts upon me?

“You do not answer!”

“What can I say? what can I do?” I returned.

“Stay in London I must not, for every day within its walls would be one of misery to me.”

“Shall I ever know why you go?”

“You shall!”

“When?”

“The night before I leave England I will put in writing (if you will permit me) the motives which influence me in acting as I do. I am satisfied that you will admit their purity, if not their strength.

“Your confidence shall not be abused.”

“I know it! In that paper I shall lay bare to you the secrets of my heart.”

“And no eye but my own shall read them. Now, will you not stay one little month longer?”

“If it be your wish, I will!”

“Oh, thank you!” said she, giving me her hand in her old, frank, cordial way. “You have made me so very happy!”

“One word more, Miss Roberts, before I go,—do you love this Stephen Dorricks?”

“Oh, spare me!” she exclaimed, turning her eyes piteously on my face. “If you would not have me go mad, do not repeat that question.”

“If you do not love him,” I persisted, honestly tell him so, and ask him to release you from a promise, the fulfilment of which can only bring misery to both.”

She threw up her hands wildly, but did not speak.

“If he be a man of honour, a man of feeling, he will not hesitate to release you. Should he be destitute of both, you have still your father to appeal to.”

“No more!” she almost shrieked. “I cannot bear it. My brain reels, and I feel as if reason was tottering on her throne. Leave me—do not stay another moment. In return for your proposed confidence, you shall hear from me soon, when that part of my conduct which now appears inexplicable shall be explained—Good bye!”

Again she gave me her hand. I pressed it fervently to my lips, and then, without hazarding another word or look, tore myself from the spot.

CHAPTER II.

CONTAINS EVELEEN'S LETTER TO MYSELF.

THE next day but one brought the following letter from Miss Roberts :—

“ Tudor Lodge, Old Kent-road,
2 o'clock, Friday, 8th May, 1845

“ I sit down to redeem my promise, that of accounting in some measure for my conduct and manners when you surprised me in the summer-house on Wednesday last. I write to you as an old friend, and in so doing I am satisfied that I shall neither be misinterpreted nor misunderstood. I place the most implicit confidence in your honour, and I feel assured that that confidence shall never be betrayed.

“ You asked me, when parting on that day, Did I love Mr. Dorricks ? When I have told you all, you will be able to judge.

“ To begin then : I heard of Mr. Dorricks from infancy but never saw him till six or seven years ago, just as I had emerged from childhood into girlhood. My father had never seen him either, but he was the son of an old

schoolfellow whom he greatly prized, and as such received by us. We were all struck with his pale, intellectual countenance, and his quiet, unassuming, though engaging manners. He was gentle and conciliating, always listening with respect to the opinions of others, rarely expressing any of his own. When called upon, however, he could reason like a 'logician,' and his arguments, I have heard papa say, were powerful and conclusive. Mr. Dorricks is no common man, and for one so young, the influence which he exercises upon all who come within his reach is truly marvellous. Is it a wonder, then, that we (my mother especially) for a time were fascinated and spell-bound by him? He made no effort to create an 'impression,' to charm us with his eloquence, or astonish us with the depth of his researches. On the contrary, he was modest and retiring, and, in this respect at least, 'hid his light under a bushel.' Notwithstanding all this he produced the very effect he seemed anxious to avoid. We felt the most unbounded admiration for him and his abilities, and looked upon every word that fell from his lips as a very 'oracle.' Papa is by no means extravagant in his notions, but he is strongly of opinion that Mr. Dorricks is the most wonderful man alive. This is a conclusion he has not hastily arrived at, but is, he declares, the result of the profoundest consideration of his character, and the strictest scrutiny of his conduct. All, or nearly all this, however, you already know. Let me hasten to the subject-matter of my letter.

"He was some time in the house before my father particularly alluded to him in my hearing. He then spoke

of him as a young man of great promise, who had lately finished his collegiate course, and had just become a convert (if I may be allowed the term) to Methodism. He had been recommended for 'honours' at all his examinations, and received, I know not how many, gold medals for Oratory and Composition. He carried all before him at Oxford, and he seemed to have carried Mr. Roberts with him too. 'He is the son of my dearest friend, now many years dead,' said he. 'We were brought up together, apprenticed together, and entered upon manhood together. He married, was unsuccessful in life, and died at an early age, through poverty and a broken heart. His wife, never very strong, soon followed him to the grave. Only one child, a son, was left behind, and I promised Mr. Dorricks, on his death-bed, that I would be a father to that child. I hope I have kept my word. I would willingly have borne all the expenses attendant upon his education; but other friends insisted on lending a helping hand, and I had no right to say them nay. We intended him for commercial pursuits, but his inclinations were of a different kind, and he determined upon Oxford. There he greatly distinguished himself, and has left behind him proofs of his powers that will not soon be forgotten. He is now staying with us, and in years to come I have other views respecting him which nearly concern myself.

"He never alluded to him again till about six months ago, when one day he came into my room, looking grave and thoughtful. He drew a chair close to mine, and motioned me to lay aside the work with which I was engaged.

“ ‘Eveleen,’ said he, when I had prepared to listen, ‘it is now right to tell you what my plans are respecting you. You have at length arrived at the age when all young women who have been so fortunate as to meet with men who will make good and faithful partners through life, should marry. You are nearly nineteen, and no longer a girl. Such a partner or husband I have found for you, and this husband is Stephen Dorricks. I made a solemn promise to his father, when his eyes were about being closed in death, that I would take care of his boy, and that when he came to man’s estate he should marry my daughter. That promise made (not lightly) to the dead must be fulfilled, and soon. I do not look for any opposition on your part—indeed, I do not think of such a thing. Your own sense of what is due to me, if nothing else, will ensure perfect and entire obedience to my will. The marriage will not take place for some time, and you will have every opportunity afforded you of judging of the man to whom I desire you to give your undivided love.’

“ And with these last words still ringing in my ears, my father left me.

“Were I to attempt to describe to you my feelings, it would be vain—utterly and entirely vain. Words would but faintly portray the sufferings of that eventful morning. Surprise, terror, rage, despair, all struggled for mastery, and the conflict was sharp and terrible. I felt humiliated, too, at being disposed of in so uncereemonious and off-hand a manner.

“ I went to Mrs. Roberts. She had been already made aware of his resolution, and well knew that it could not be

shaken. She sympathised with me, nevertheless, and advised an appeal to him, though she felt that little good could result from it. 'Having done this,' said she, 'you have done all that you can do.' This was the only consolation my poor dear mother afforded me. Though she thought it a little hard that I should be compelled to marry one whom, in so short a time, I could scarcely be supposed to love; yet as that man was such an admirable one, she really did not see anything so very terrible in it, after all.' The morning of her own life had been cloudy, and she had married my father on an extremely short notice. Well, I did appeal to him, and tried by every argument in my power to touch his heart. Vain! Much as he loves his child, he is blind to her tears—deaf to her entreaties. He is fixed—resolute—immovable. His will is law, and that law, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, 'altereth not.'

"What can I do? My case is hopeless!

"Mr. Dorricks is kind, polite, attentive. He meets me always with his most winning smile, but never speaks of love or marriage. The latter I suppose he looks upon as an '*un fait accompli*,' and perhaps does not consider the former by any means indispensable to his happiness.

"I can never love Mr. Dorricks!

"I can respect—nay, admire him. No more!

"My father is kind, but he is a MAN OF PRINCIPLE and I am a victim at the *shrine* of principle.

"I can think of no way of escape save one. I will appeal, as you advised me, too Dorricks himself.

"I will tell him the truth, and throw myself on his mercy.

"I will ask him to spare and save me. If he be the man I think him, he will do so.

"Half-past seven P.M.

"I have just seen Dorricks. No hope—no hope. He has raised his great calm eyes to mine, and told me that he is powerless in the matter; that he cannot move; that the contract was made years ago when he was an infant by his father and mine; that the former has been long dead, and that it is to the latter he must now refer me.

"‘See your father, Miss Roberts,’ he said, with a smile of perfect resignation, ‘and tell him that I am entirely in his hands.’

"Alas, too well I know what that means.

"Escape seems now impossible. My father is resolved; my doom is pronounced; the victim, must be immolated.

"I have nothing more to add except to remind you of your promised confidence. If your motives be for leaving what, on consideration, I fear they are, then I would say, Go, and quickly. This is no longer a place for you;—seek peace and happiness elsewhere. May both be yours though they be denied to the unfortunate Eveleen!

"P.S.—Eight o'clock.

"The broken portrait you saw in the garden was that of Dorricks,—it came through Mrs. Roberts. He was too diffident to offer it himself—at least, I suppose so.
HE IS A MAN OF STONE,

"God help me!

"Ten minutes later.

"I am at the piano—Dorricks beside me. I play at random, and my father watches me, I made no effort to appear happy. How can I? Anguish and despair are in my heart. When, oh, when—will it break?"

And so ended the letter.

Blotted, soiled, and nearly illegible, the hand that penned it must have been indeed unsteady, and the heart that dictated it indeed wretched.

The allusion to myself was plain and forcible. She had probed my weakness; perhaps my secret had long been hers. If so, she would respect it.

How and when to go? was now the question. Should I go openly, or like a thief? If the former, what excuse could I possibly give to Stephen for so doing, or what motives could I urge? Even when those motives were made known to him, is it at all likely that he would permit, without an effort, such a sacrifice on my part? I think not.

To go openly, then, seemed out of the question, and secrecy and night alone remained.

"Go, and go quickly," were her last words? She shall be obeyed, thought I, cost what it may. I will prepare at once, and in another fortnight I shall be far from England.

CHAPTER III.

A TALK ABOUT DORRICKS AND OTHERS.

“You have heard the news, I suppose, George,” said Graham, bounding into my room, the evening of the day on which I received Eveleen’s letter.

“The news! What news?”

“Why, my cousin’s marriage with Dorricks, to be sure.”

“I have heard it,” said I, with an effort.

“Confound the fellow? I don’t half like him.”

“He is liked, notwithstanding, Graham.”

“Liked! By whom?”

“By Mr. Roberts, for instance.”

“O yes, I suppose so. My uncle likes everyone that’s clever, and Dorricks is clever.”

“The world says so,” I replied.

“Oh, hang the world!” returned my companion; “it’s as often wrong as right; oftener, if the truth

were known. Now the world once said that I was clever, and just see what a mistake it made."

"The mistake is not a very palpable one, and I confess that I, myself share in it."

"Do you? well I never thought you such a fool. Clever men are not quite so plentiful as to be picked up among the hedges and ditches of life. To be a clever man you must be alike an honest man—'one picked out of ten thousand.' Now, you are thought clever."

"I?"

"You!"

"My good friend, you are jesting with me."

"My good friend, I am doing nothing of the sort. If you are not a shining man, you are a steady one, and the latter is very often the cleverer of the two. The shining man is like base coin—more than suspected! the steady man always passes current. Dorricks says so."

Dorricks again!

"What an evening for a walk! so clear and pleasant, and not too warm. What do you say to a turn down the Strand?"

"I have been thinking of going as far as Loaders."

"Let us go there, then," said he, cheerfully, and rising; "there is no place I would rather go to. What a sweet little thing that Fanny Loader is, George!"

"She will not be long among us, I fear."

"Oh, nonsense, man? She will live for many years to come, and bring happiness one day to some poor fellow's home."

"I hope so," I replied, fervently.

"I often think about her," he continued.

"So do I."

"Don't say so, George, or I shall get jealous. Think of Mary and the rest as long as you like, but leave Fanny to me."

"With all my heart," said I, and we went out.

Graham was unusually silent that night at Loader's, and his eye wandered continually to the sofa where Fanny sat. She was low-spirited and restless, and asked to be taken to her room before the blinds were drawn.

"We bade her good night, and sat down again.

"Poor child, she has not been herself latterly." said Mr. Loader drawing towards the fire.

Graham glanced at him uneasily, but said nothing. Once he took up the poker to stir the fire, but with a sigh laid it down again as if he had suddenly changed his mind. "I fear she does not take exercise enough, Mr. Loader," I half suggested.

"So I say, George, but the girls will have me believe that she is better indoors, though I must confess that I would much rather see her out in the clear sunshine amongst the trees and flowers, than sitting here all day, like a gloomy little recluse."

"Why not try change of air and scene?" I asked.

"I could not part with her," was the brief reply.

"Besides, she has never been a day from home all her life, and I know that if now removed from it she would, like many a transplanted flower, droop, wither, and die."

"How old is she?" said Graham, looking up, and speaking for the first time.

"Seventeen last October; she is nearly two years younger than Eveleen Roberts."

"Poor Eveleen!" sighed Richard. "I wish from my heart that I could think this Dorricks worthy of her."

"And is he not?" inquired Loader. "I have observed the man closely, and think him in every respect well-calculated to make her happy."

"He will not break her neck," replied Graham bluntly, "but he may break her heart. If I know anything of woman, I would say that she does not love him."

"I never thought of that." And Loader seemed lost in thought.

"They tell me every one likes him. Well, I do not positively dislike him, but I nevertheless make it a point to see as little of him as I possibly can," said Graham, directing his eyes towards Mr. Loader.

"In other words, you avoid him?"

"If you will interpret it so I cannot help it," replied Graham, smiling.

"Take care you're not a little jealous of him, Richard."

"I? Oh, heaven forbid? He never crossed my path, nor is he likely to do so. Besides, our interests are not at all likely to clash, so far as I can see. You know that I am, and have been, perfectly independent of my uncle, and that my own private means are quite sufficient to keep me so. Were I inclined for commercial pursuits I could at any moment embark in them, and with a large capital, too; but trading was never my *forte*. No, no; let Dorricks keep his way, and I mine! the world is wide enough for us both."

"True, and I hope you will both be useful in it," was his reply.

The girls soon after re-entered, minus Fanny; and having chatted for an hour or two longer, we took our leave.

"George," said Graham, when we found ourselves in the street, "George it is useless to conceal it,—*I love Fanny Loader!*"

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH I AGAIN VISIT THE "SHOREDITCH."

DORRICKS! ever and everlastingly Stephen Dorricks! He sits with me, eats with me, walks with me, talks with me, and, I believe, sometimes sleeps with me too. Not literally, of course, but metaphorically. Literally, he does occasionally talk with me, and, like Graham, I try to avoid him. He evidently wishes to be friendly with me, and without absolutely rejecting his friendship, I give him to understand (not saying it in so many words, of course) that I can get on very well without him.

My time here is short, I thought, and the less I know about this man the better.

But Eveleen, poor self-sacrificed Eveleen (for self-sacrificed I hold her to be), my heart's thoughts are ever with her. Sleeping or waking, I see her in that garden at Tudor Lodge, with the crushed miniature and the lock of hair.

I called once at the "Shoreditch" for the purpose of seeing Marston, but was informed by Mr. Hopkins that he believed he had left London on some private business, and that he could not exactly say when he was likely to return. If I had any letter or message I could leave it.

I told him that I had every reason to believe that he had not left London, and that as I was a particular friend of his, I requested he might be sent for at once.

"Oh! that's a horse of a different colour," said Mr. Hopkins, brightening up; "why didn't you tell me that before? Mr. Neville's friends are so very numerous that we can't be supposed to know them all; and really, Mister, without meaning you any offence, I don't remember having seen your face before."

"It's all right, sir," said my acquaintance the pot boy, coming forward. "The gentleman *is* a friend of Mr. Neville, and helped him to drink a pint of gin hot, and brandy to no end, on these here premises one night."

The compliment was as equivocal as it was

undeserved, nevertheless it produced a visible impression in my favour. Mr. Hopkins pulled off his cap, which he had worn hitherto, and stood contemplating me admiringly for at least two minutes. The man who could help to drink a pint of gin hot, and brandy to no end, was one to be admired and respected.

“I ask your pardon, young gentleman, for doubting you,” said he, after he had done admiring me; “but you see I thought as how you might have been a ‘dun,’ or something of the sort, and that you were a-laying a trap for our mutual friend. If as how you *was* a-laying a trap, and as how our ‘mutual friend’ tumbled into it, why then this here child would get blame,—that’s all.”

The pot-boy was then despatched for Neville, as he was called; and Hopkins, having resumed his cap, and taken down a long pipe, after offering me another, which I declined, again addressed me.

“Known Mr. Neville long, sir?”

“Some years.”

“Oh! capital man, sir! first-rate company—


keeps a room alive—wins his money like a prince, and spends it like a hemperor. Wouldn't desire a better if I was to live to the age of Methusalem."

Hopkins jerked out his words so rapidly between the whiffs of his pipe that I had some difficulty in following him. How a man could *win* money like a prince was a problem he doubtless could solve, but a strict regard for truth compels me to say that I could not.

"Queer place this, sir," he continued, noticing my eye wandering round the premises—"very queer place—does a good business, though—forty barrels a month, chiefly porter—hasn't changed hands these twenty years."

"Oh, indeed," I replied.

"A fact, sir. Mat Riordan, an Irishman, had it before me. A good fellow was Mat, but hasty, too fond of lush and fighting; used to brain the customers with his own pints—didn't do, sir—people got afraid of him—dropped off—he took to drinking whiskey in the mornings, did Mat—a bad thing, sir—went on from that to worse—was sold up by the brewers—turned out by the ground



landlord—went back to Ireland, and hanged himself like a man.”

“He is dead, then, this Mr. Riordan?”

“Oh dear yes, sir. Mat never did things by halves. When he said he’d hang himself, hang himself he would—no disappointing of the public—wasn’t shabby enough for that—bought a rope, sir—forgave his enemies, brewers and all—and died game. That’s what Mat did, sir—yes, sir.”

What more Mat might have done, having Mr. Hopkins for a chronicler, it is difficult to say; but the pot-boy now entered, and announced that “Mr. Neville had just left the house, that the landlord knew,” but a messenger had been despatched to look for him somewhere, that the landlord did *not* know; and if the gentleman wasn’t in a particular hurry, and could wait half-an-hour or so, he’d be sure to hear something of him.

I was in no particular hurry, and could wait.

Mr. Hopkins was glad of it. Would I sit down?

Of course I would. Would Mr. Hopkins take a drop of anything?

Well, ne didn't usually do it with customers, not a landlord's place, and always told against him in the end ; but as I was a friend of Mr. Neville's, he didn't mind on this occasion taking a glass of rum.

Mr. Hopkins warmed with his rum, and told me a great many things about the "Shoreditch" that I had not previously known. I wish I could remember them now ; they might possibly interest the reader. I know that sometimes he dealt very much in the horrible, and revelled in blood for ten minutes at a time, which led me to think that at one period of his life, and long before Mr. Riordan's hurried exit from the world, he must have been either a "stage murderer" or an effective "body snatcher."

He left me when Marston entered.

Our greeting was cordial, for I had long since learnt to forgive.

He was perfectly sober, and was dressed with some care and attention. I was pleased at the change.

"I am glad to see you," said I.

"And I am glad to see you," he returned ;

"but sit down ; I can't stay very long, for I have an appointment for half-an-hour hence."

"I hope your thirst for gambling is nearly satisfied?"

"I am giving it up, George ; giving it up by degrees. Can't do it all in a moment, you know. I'm nearly cured now, and think I'll try and live honestly for the remainder of my days."

"You rejoice me, Mr Marston."

"Your conversation the other evening has made an impression upon me. I took it home and studied it, and have come to the conclusion that there's a possibility of my yet reforming."

"Oh, believe it!"

"Well, I'm trying to do it, but it's hard work ; retracing one's steps is difficult enough."

"But going on is far worse."

"Well, there's something in that," said Mr. Marston, decisively.

"Have you seen Jackson lately?" I asked.

"Jackson?—oh, yes," he replied, looking a little confused ; "that's the chap you told me to keep my eye on."

"The same."

"Well, I saw him two or three nights ago."

"Did he speak to you?"

"A little; he is a deep fellow, I think."

"Does he gamble much?"

"No."

"Will you watch him still?"

"Depend upon it; I have reasons now for watching him."

"What are they?"

"I cannot tell you—at least, not now. In good time you shall know."

"How am I to think of him in the meantime? I have sometimes looked upon him as a fool."

"Well, if he be," replied Marston, "I don't know where the wise men are to come from. But my time's up."

"You are going already?"

"Yes; I have work to do. Keep up your heart, George; for this Stephen Dorricks, near as he is to it, hasn't yet married Eveleen Roberts; and if I don't baulk him in it, my name's not Marston! Farewell!"

The grasp he gave my hand was that of a vice ; and when I turned round he was gone.

“ Before I left the “Shoreditch ” I wrote him a long letter, telling him of my resolve, and bidding him a final adieu. I enclosed in it a sum of money, and gave it to Mr. Hopkins to be delivered at the first opportunity, having previously marked on the envelope, “ Not to be opened for a fortnight from this date.” I next, and for the last time, warmed up my friend with a little more rum, and having bade him good-night, left him to his own reflections.

I then went home, and found Mr. O’Leary quietly smoking a cigar by the kitchen fire. He joined me in the parlour, and we sat up talking till midnight. Our conversation again turned upon the approaching marriage—which Stephen discussed after his old fashion ; and just as the clock struck twelve we shook hands and sought our rooms.

One—two—three o’clock ! but no thought of bed. Four o’clock shall come and find my candle still burning. I am writing the promised note to

Eveleen—to be given to her when the proper time is at hand. It must be candid and truthful in all respects—even as her own. Nothing shall be concealed; the innermost recesses of my soul shall be laid bare; and then she will see how strong, how abiding was my love.

Quarter-past 5 a.m. My task is done; the last sentence is written; the last farewell given. Blinded and exhausted, I sink back into my chair; and the silence and darkness of the grave are upon me!

CHAPTER V.

I WRITE LETTERS, ETC.

My letter ran thus :—

“Tuesday morning, I o'clock.

“The time has come when I should write to you, and as briefly and as plainly as I can. For the confidence you have reposed in me, I am deeply grateful, and shall continue so to the last hours of my existence. I feel my own unworthiness, yet, if I know anything of myself, I am persuaded that I am incapable of betraying you or any human being. Whatever may be my faults, treachery or deceit is, at least, not among them. To begin, then.

“My father was, as you are aware, a medical man, and of some eminence in the profession, but dying at a comparatively early age, and under peculiarly painful circumstances, his wife and child were left almost wholly unprovided for. His income was never very large, and was barely sufficient to sustain respectably the position which he occupied in life. He looked forward, doubtless, to a long and successful career, during which a fortune might be accumulated, and an independence secured for failing health and old age. Most men picture to them-

selves a bright future, else why should they struggle so determinedly with the difficulties which, at the outset, mountains like, stretch themselves across their path? Did not hope gild that future, how dark, indeed, would be the present! My father was a rising man, and position and entire success seemed only a matter of time. He had a good and increasing practice—a respectable and profitable connection, and there was no reason why he should not retire in the evening of his life, wealthy, having ‘borne the heat and burthen of the day.’

“I mention these things to vindicate my father’s memory from the charge of thoughtlessness or extravagance, should you at any time have been led to infer either. He was a young man struggling into life, and could save but little: he did, however, what he considered a very wise thing—he insured his life. This insurance cost him many pounds a-year, paid with a willing and cheerful heart, and gained his widow nothing in the dark hour of trial and sorrow, save trouble, expense, and bitter, because unlooked-for, disappointment. In a word, the insurance company in a court of law disputed their liability, and, through suborned witnesses, achieved a triumph. I was then a child, but I remember it well—remember her grief, her anguish, and, as time rolled on, her entire submission to the Divine will. She was weak, but she had learnt to lean upon a strong arm—even the arm of her Father and her God. Who ever yet leant upon that arm, and found it fail? .

. “Keeping brevity steadily before me, I pass over much

that could possess but little interest for you, and come to the man to whom my mother two years afterwards gave her hand.

* * * * *

"And so far you know my history, and so far it has been known to everyone around me, but I thought that you did not and could not know anything of my inner self; that they had been hidden from your eyes—from the eyes of the world.

"A single line in your letter shows me that I am mistaken; that you know my secret, and that at least you pity me.

"Yes, Eveleen Roberts, I love you, and have loved you; when, or how it began, I know not, but as time rolled on, it seemed to grow with my growth, and strengthen with my strength, and you became a part of my existence itself. 'Twas foolish—'twas weak. Our relative positions should have shown me the madness of nursing such a passion, and the utter impossibility of its ever being returned. I saw, 'tis true, the wide gulf between us, but I thought—poor foolish boy—that my love would bridge it over.

* * * * *

"Shall I go on, or now lay down my pen? I can add but little to what I have already said—little beyond the expression of my deep, devoted, and undying love. Blame me not, for you inspired that love.

"This is now no place for me. For the wide world, I would not remain to see you the wife of any man, much

less the wife of Stephen Dorricks. I will go, I know not and care not where, so long as it be from England. A voluntary exile, I shall seek another home, where labour is plenty and labourers few, and there pass my life, unknowing and unknown.

"In three days I leave this; in three weeks you shall be a wife. May God make you a happy one, and may that happiness never be marred by a thought of

"GEORGE ALLEN."

The paper is blistered with my tears as I throw it down, and I feel as if an icy hand were laid upon my heart.

But another duty remains. I must write to poor, generous, open-hearted Stephen, and the no-less-generous and open-hearted Mrs. O'Leary; and these letters cost me tears, too—bitter, scalding tears. I dared not, as I wrote, think of the shock my disappearance would give them, and the lengths to which their love would urge them to discover my retreat; but I told them the whole truth, and hid from them nothing.

The third letter was to Mr. Roberts, telling him that, for reasons I felt bound not to state, I was compelled to leave his house, and secretly, and begging him not to impute unworthy motives to

me. I concluded by expressing my gratitude for the kindness and encouragement I had met with at his hands, and praying a blessing upon his family and himself.

Only three days now remained to me, and slowly and sadly they passed. On the second evening I went to Tudor Lodge, and contrived, unperceived, to slip my letter to Eveleen. She took it with a pale, anxious face, and then retired to her own room.

Mr. Roberts had not gone to business that day, and he received me with more cordiality than he had ever done before.

He told me that Mr. Loader was about to retire from the post of cashier, owing to old age and failing health, and had strongly recommended *me* to succeed him.

I pleaded my unfitness for the office, and urged him to persuade that gentleman to remain.

"No," said Mr. Roberts, shaking his head ; "he has done his work, and a younger and more active man must now take his place. I own I had at first some thoughts of my nephew ; but he

would not seriously entertain such a thing, indeed, his inexperience and unbusiness-like habits would quite unfit him for such a post. Besides, he said that it would be an act of positive injustice to you to give the place to another. I think, therefore, that, all things considered, you must be our new cashier."

"I am grateful, sir," said I, "for this new mark of confidence; but, for private reasons, I fear I must decline."

He looked at me hard.

"Decline, George?—that's strange! Take time to consider: such an offer is not made every day."

"I am aware of it, sir," I replied; "but I dare not accept that offer."

"What is it that prevents you? Do not think you are depriving Mr. Loader of anything; services like his do not go unrewarded—he becomes my 'sleeping partner.'"

"I sincerely and unfeignedly rejoice at it, Mr. Roberts; and so will everybody who knows him. A truer or a more faithful servant than Mr. Loader never existed."

"I believe all that," he returned, "and therefore his recommendation has great weight with me. Come, don't be too precipitate; you may repent it one day; take a week to reflect, and then let me know the result."

"Another week! Would I stay? Who knows what that week may bring forth. For the first time I thought of Marston's last words in the "Shoreditch."

Undecided, I turned to speak, when the door opened, and Dorricks entered.

"Do I interrupt you?" he asked, in a silvery voice.

"Oh, no," said Mr. Roberts, "George and I were only talking about Mr. Loader."

"Dear, good old man!" sighed Dorricks.

"I have been pressing George to succeed him, Dorricks."

Dorricks raised his eyes gently to Mr. Roberts's face with a quiet, "Indeed!"

"Yes, and I have some difficulty in prevailing on him to do so."

"Mr. Allen has doubtless good reasons for

rejecting—no, that's a harsh word," he added, checking himself suddenly, and bowing apologetically to me—"for declining so good an offer."

"I have, Mr. Dorricks, and if you knew them, you would, I am sure, appreciate them."

Dorricks again bowed, but did not speak.

"I have asked him to take a week to consider," continued Mr. Roberts, "and perhaps by that time his mind may change."

"Perhaps," said Mr. Dorricks, softly.

"I have been telling him what you already know, Stephen—my intentions with reference to Loader. This evening the deed of partnership is to be signed, and I expect him here presently. Will you be one of the witnesses?"

"With infinite pleasure, and I thank you much for having asked me. Mr. Allen, I presume, will be the other?"

"No, Mr. Rentoul, the stockbroker; everything must be done in a clear, business-like manner."

"Right, quite right," rejoined Dorricks. "Mr. Rentoul is a most excellent man, and well versed in such matters, I have no doubt. We poor

scholars," he added, with a smile, "know very little about them."

"Nor is it necessary that you should, Stephen."

Stephen replied by another bow, and then, bending down, said in a low voice, "Can I say a word to you, sir?"

"Certainly," replied Mr. Roberts, and they withdrew to a window some distance from where I sat.

"Oh, pray don't leave, Mr. Allen," said Dorricks, observing that I had risen from my chair and was moving towards the door; "a minute or two will be sufficient for me; I will not detain Mr. Roberts longer."

I returned to my seat and took up a book, but had scarcely read half-a-dozen lines when their conversation ended, and they both returned to the places they had quitted, Dorricks looking calmness itself; Mr. Roberts, as I thought, a little flushed and excited.

"How old is Mr. Loader?" asked Dorricks, after a pause.

"Probably sixty," said Mr. Roberts, looking

up with a slightly troubled face, "but he seems, I have no doubt, ten years more."

"His health is not very good, I believe?"

"No, he has always been ailing, but, humanly speaking, he is likely to last these many years to come. I dare say if we now go into the parlour we shall find him and the tea waiting for us. George, we will let that matter rest for the present. Nothing decided on either side; a little reflection will do us both no harm."

Dorrick opened the door, and held it for Mr. Roberts and myself. As I passed out, I looked him steadily in the eye, but his features were calm and unruffled, and, with a graceful, easy gesture, he closed the door behind us.

But Mr. Loader had not yet come, and we sat talking over indifferent subjects with Mrs. Roberts for about twenty minutes.

"Where is Eveleen?" Mr. Roberts asked, suddenly.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Roberts," said his wife, starting up as if she had been stung.

"I was asking you about Eveleen; where is she?"

"Well, in the garden, I should say, my dear. Shall I fetch her?"

"No! Dorricks can do it."

"Oh, don't disturb Mr. Dorricks," said the lady, rising.

"Disturb Dorricks! Nonsense! You forget, Mrs. Roberts, that they are to be married in a fortnight. Disturb Dorricks, indeed!"

"I had forgotten," said Mrs. Roberts, smiling, and sinking back into her seat, "indeed, I don't think I'm quite myself this evening. Mr. Dorricks, will you be good enough to hand me those salts beside you?"

Dorricks had already risen, and now carried the smelling-salts to Mrs. Roberts.

"Thank you! Will you oblige me by returning it to its place?"

A smile from Dorricks, and the thing was done. He next moved to the door, and laid his hand upon the handle.

"By the way, Mr. Dorricks, I think Eveleen is in her own room; I now remember her saying that she had something or another to do there."

"Well, call her yourself, Jane," said Mr. Roberts, wiping his spectacles, and looking through the window, "for here comes Loader, and he's five-and-twenty minutes late, too."

Mr. Loader now entered, and Eveleen and Mrs. Roberts soon after joined us, followed by Mr. Rentoul.

Mr. Roberts and Mr. Rentoul had all the conversation to themselves at tea, and it chiefly turned upon business. Mrs. Roberts superintended the tea-table, and at times seemed a little fidgetty. She occasionally 'over-flowed' the cups, or put sugar into the saucers, and the milk into the slop-bowl, and committed sundry mistakes of a rather amusing character. Dorricks offered to assist her, an offer which the good little lady gratefully accepted, and surrendered the tea-urn with a sigh of relief. Mrs. Roberts was beside me, and in drawing back dropped her handkerchief. I took it up and handed it to her, and under its cover she hastily pressed something into my hand. I turned to look at Dorricks, fearing discovery, but he was quietly handing Mr. Rentoul

a cup of tea, and looking with a placid smile in that gentleman's face; whilst Mr. Roberts and Mr. Loader, with their heads almost touching each other, were deeply absorbed in facts and figures.

Tea being over, I stepped out for an instant, under pretence of removing the tea-urn for the small girl who came to take it away, but in reality to look at my letter, for such I guessed it was. It was as follows :—

“Your resolve is a wise one, and the sooner you act upon it the better. It is a great sacrifice you are about to make; a sacrifice almost as great as my own. Nothing can move Dorricks, and there is nothing left me to hope for but the grave. Willingly would I hide myself in it from him; but I must bide my time. Do not see me again to-night, if you can avoid it; of all things do not speak to me—I am already wretched enough. May my prayers be heard in your behalf, and may I live long enough to hear of your entire happiness!

“You have seen a lock of hair in the summer-house—it is mine; would you like to have it? If so, take it, but when the day of my marriage comes, wherever you are, destroy it. I know you will do this. For the last time, farewell, and for ever!”

“EVELEEN,”

The golden lock lay neatly folded in the paper,

and placing both carefully in my breast-pocket, I hurried back to the parlour.

Dorricks looked at me, as I re-entered, with slightly elevated eyebrows, and I resumed my seat with as much quietness and self-possession as I could command. Shortly afterwards the necessary documents were signed which converted the firm of Roberts & Co. into that of Roberts and Loader.

It was ten o'clock when we separated, leaving Dorricks seated at chess with Mrs. Roberts, and Mr. Roberts reading the evening paper.

Mr. Rentoul parted with Mr. Loader and myself at Charing Cross, and we walked arm-in-arm up the Strand until we got as far as Wellington-street. Here I was about to wish him good-night, when he begged me to go a little further with him, as he had something he desired to say. I consented, and whilst passing the box-entrance of the "Lyceum," he said—"George, I wished to say a few words to you this evening, but could find no opportunity to do so at Mr. Roberts's; the present, however, will answer every purpose.

Our relative positions are now, as you are aware, about to alter, and I am anxious to express to you my deep sense of the services you have rendered me the six years we have been associated together. You have been my fellow-worker, and have often borne much of the burthen which would otherwise have pressed too heavily on me. I confess you have been to me as a son, and I am deeply grieved at even our partial separation. I shall see you often, however, as you must come and spend an hour with us in the evenings, and we can enjoy ourselves in the old, quiet way. You will not see me often at Cannon-street, for I now need rest, and you know I am to be but a 'sleeping partner' in the concern, and you must be the medium of communication between Mr. Roberts and myself. Good-night, my dear boy, and may God protect and bless you ! Now lend me your umbrella, for the rain is beginning to come down."

I did so. He grasped my hand with a warmth that brought tears to my eyes, and pressing something soft into it, passed up Hanover-street, and was gone.

I stood for a moment looking after him, then opening the sealed envelope which I found in my hand, examined it by the aid of a lamp a little distance off. On a half sheet of note-paper two or three lines were hastily scrawled, begging of me to accept the enclosed as a slight token of his esteem and regard. It was a cheque for one hundred pounds, payable to Edward Loader, or bearer.

I had hardly read the foregoing, when two men, apparently the worse for liquor, staggered against me, and I was driven violently against the lamp-post. I turned to remonstrate, and instead of an apology received a blow from one of the ruffians, dealt with such force that I was sent sprawling upon my back in the mire, followed by a volley of curses, oaths, and imprecations. Covered with blood and dirt, I hastily arose, assisted by a gentleman who came up at the moment, but found the villains had decamped. I related the circumstance to this gentleman, who, having taken my address, and advised me to get home as quickly as possible, left for the purpose of putting the police upon their track. I hailed the first

cabby I met, and directed him to drive to Mr. O'Leary's without delay.

"You have got a fall, sir," said the man, eyeing me closely as he opened the door.

"Yes, yes," I replied, impatiently, and jumping into the cab; "drive on as quickly as you can, and you shall have double fare."

Before he pulled up, I examined my pockets to see that nothing was missing. With a groan I sank back into my seat; the cheque, and some loose money which I had taken out with me that evening, were safe, *but Eveleen's note and lock of hair were gone.*

Both Stephen and Mrs. O'Leary were greatly shocked at the appearance I presented; and when I told them what had happened, they expressed the deepest indignation. They felt thankful, however, that it was no worse.

I went to bed at once, and Stephen was soon by my side, holding in his hand a glass of brandy-punch "screeching hot."

"Drink up this instanter!" said he; "and then cover yourself up for the night. I'll brighten

your fire a bit, for the room feels like an icicle. By the piper that 'played before Moses,' if I had those Bow-street friends of yours here just now I'd cheat the hangman of a job, and give the devil his own sooner than he expected!" Stephen grasped the poker as he spoke, and struck at the heads of imaginary assailants.

Left to myself I began to reflect upon the events of the night, or rather the evening and night combined. And, first of all, the retirement of Mr. Loader, and the strange, though kind proposition that I should succeed him; the earnestness with which the office was pressed upon my acceptance, and the suddenness with which the offer was all but withdrawn. Then, again, Eveleen's hurried note, Mr. Roberts's confusion and the altered expression (slight as it was), of Dorricks's face as I re-entered after concealing the lock of hair. And following up these, Mr. Loader's kind words and generous gift, and his parting gripe as he prayed of God to bless me; the encounter with the strange men; the unprovoked attack; the blow, the oaths, the imprecations.

tions, and last, and worst of all, the disappearance of the letter and hair. What could have become of them? Were they lost or stolen? If either, why was my money safe? Nay, even the cheque and envelope placed in my hand by Mr. Loader, and almost carelessly thrust into my pocket, why were they not lost or stolen also? If the men who assaulted me were bent on robbery, my watch would have been worth the trouble of taking, and the check, payable to bearer, a small fortune. But to do them justice, in nowise did they resemble footpads or pickpockets, but rather a couple of inebriated ruffians, who in the hilarity of the moment considered it good fun to roll a sober man in the mud. At any rate, thought I, the rascals are in custody by this time, and, as the gentleman who so kindly assisted me took my name and address to Bow-street I shall hear from the police in the morning. And then came another and more serious reflection. If the men were arrested there would of necessity be a trial, and this would involve my remaining in London for weeks, perhaps months, and during that time

what I so much dreaded would actually take place—the marriage of Eveleen. I now bitterly repented having given my address, and earnestly hoped and prayed that my assailants would not be found.

“Give me but till to-morrow,” I exclaimed,
“and all will be well.”

But that lock of hair!

It was hopelessly and irretrievably gone.

And thus I thought and thus I grieved till my heart grew wearied of both, and, worn out and exhausted, I at length sank into an unbroken slumber.

CHAPTER VI.

A SURPRISE! A FALSE ARREST. DEATH OF
LOADER—I AM ACCUSED OF MURDER.

I MIGHT have slept some three or four hours when I was awakened by a loud knocking, and a low murmur of voices at the street-door. I sprang from my bed and threw up the window, just in time to hear Stephen demand in no very dulcet tones—"Who's there?"

"The police!" was the brief reply.

"What the deuce do you want here?" was the next question.

"Open the door, and you shall know."

"I'll be hanged if I do. A pretty thing it is that a man must be knocked out of his bed at three o'clock in the morning by a parcel of infernal scamps!"

"Scamps!—I tell you we're police."

"And the devil a straw I care what you are!"

If you be, more shame for you to be breaking the peace of the neighbourhood when you should be preserving it, and taking liberties with the knocker of an Irish gentleman's hall-door, and keeping him in the passage, when there's a draught from the back-door whistling through his bones that a 'peeler' himself (and he's used to it, by all accounts) couldn't stand."

"What's the matter, Stephen?" cried Biddy, speaking from the top of the stairs, whilst I hurried on my clothes as quickly as possible, muttering as I did so—"Already!"

"Oh, the deuce a bit of me knows," replied Stephen.

"Will you open or not?" demanded one who was evidently the leader of the party.

"Will I open? Come, that's cool!—of course, I'll not open. An Irishman's 'house is his castle,' especially when he pays his taxes. Perhaps you'd like to see my receipts,"—and I heard the sharp click of a pistol trigger as he brought it to the cock,

I was bounding down the stairs, for I feared mischief.

“Once more, will you open the door?”

“Once more, No!”

“Recollect I’m a serjeant of police.”

“Faith then you’re not likely ever to be an inspector; for as sure as my name’s O’Leary, if you don’t take yourself off out of this, I’ll stop your further promotion in a brace of shakes, and create a vacancy among the serjeants of the B division.”

“Force the door!” was the stern, peremptory order.

“Stay!” cried I, clearing the last half-dozen steps at a bound—“it is me they want; open the door and admit them.”

“Want you!—what do they want you for?”

“Didn’t I tell you?”

“No!”

“I forgot it, then, in my hurry, but it’s now too late. Open the door, and at once; they mean no harm: they have arrested the fellows who assaulted me, and now want me to identify them.”

“Oh, that’s a different affair,” said Stephen, throwing open the door. “Come in, gentlemen;

sorry to keep you waiting, and glad I didn't pop you, serjeant, for I was mighty near it. Strike a match, one of you, whilst I get the candle."

"What do you mean by resisting and threatening the police?" asked the serjeant, as we entered the parlour, preceded by Stephen with a lighted candle.

"And what do you mean by thundering at my door in that unceremonious manner at three o'clock in the morning?" demanded Stephen.

"I'm a police sergeant, and——"

"Yes, you told me that before, and I told you what I was near doing to him."

"You shall answer for this language, sir."

"Possibly," replied Stephen, with the utmost *nonchalance*; the amount of discretionary power vested in you gentlemen of the baton appears to be quite unlimited."

"Your wit, or whatever you please to call it, sir, is quite lost upon me; my duty is before me, and it must be done."

"If not considered too great a liberty, might I inquire what that duty is?"

"Certainly! You are Mr. Stephen O'Leary, I believe?"

"Your discernment does you great credit, my friend," said Stephen, drawing himself up to a height sufficient to astonish even a sergeant of police.

"You confess yourself to be the person?"

"Faith, I'm not likely to deny it."

"You are my prisoner, then, sir," said the man, laying his hand upon my uncle's shoulder, "and this is my warrant."

"Warrant! Oh, to the devil with you and your warrants," interrupted Stephen, shaking himself from the grasp of the sergeant as if it had been that of an infant, and placing his back firmly and determinedly against the wall. "I can take a joke as well as any man alive, but hang me if this ain't more than I can stand."

"If it's a joke its none of my making," said the fellow, stulkily, "so lay hold of him, men."

The police advanced.

"Back!" thundered my uncle in a voice that shook the room, as he pointed the pistol, which he

held all along in his hand, at the heads of the officers—"back! or, as the Lord is above us this blessed morning, I'll make work for the coroner and grave-digger before long!"

The men looked a little cowed, and hesitated.

It was now high time to interpose. Gradually I was beginning to see that there was some mistake in the matter.

"May I ask to see the warrant?" I inquired.

"There!" and he flourished it before my eyes.

"Read it, George," said Biddy, who seemed used to scenes of this description; "read it; I am sure the gentleman is mistaken."

"I hope so, ma'am," said the serjeant, who really looked as if he wished it; "mistakes sometimes occur in the best-regulated families; but I got this warrant from a constable with an unpronounceable name, who says he comes from a place called Athenry, and is charged with this gentleman's arrest."

"And why didn't he come here himself, instead of sending another to do his dirty work," said

Stephen, advancing into the centre of the room and quietly laying down his pistols.

“ Well, to tell you the truth,” said the serjeant, laughing, for now that Stephen had laid down the pistol and exhibited a desire to make terms he thought he could afford to be a little merry, “ to tell you the truth, he’s now under arrest himself.”

“ Under arrest himself ! What do you mean ?”

“ Why, this. He got this warrant to arrest you on a charge of killing a gentleman named Bodkin in a duel three or four weeks ago.”

“ Mother of glory !” exclaimed Stephen, “ and is poor Billy gone at last ?”

“ So it seems ! Well, he arrived in London yesterday morning, and succeeded in tracing you to Hammersmith, when he learnt from an elderly gentleman that you had left a week before for this neighbourhood ; but your Irish friend, instead of following up his advantage without delay, thought a drop would do him no harm before he went there. So, to make my story short, he got drunk and uproarious ; challenged half-a-dozen coal-heavers to fight ; broke two of their heads ; was

taken to the 'lock-up;' searched, and the warrant was found upon him. When he became a little more sober he told us all about it, and as he said you meditated an escape to the Continent, we were ordered to arrest you without further delay."

Stephen laughed, and laughed immoderately. "My good friend," said he, "you have been sadly hoaxed; the gentleman at Hammersmith is no other than the one you are in search of, the real 'Simon Pure' himself."

"Impossible!" said the serjeant, incredulously.

"True, nevertheless. The person you want is my uncle, though only ten years older than myself."

"Then if what you say be true, our man has indeed escaped us."

"Not a doubt of it," returned Stephen.

"Well, it's all that drunken Irishman's fault," said the disappointed officer; "but of course, sir, you cannot expect me to take up your story as gospel."

"By no means," replied Stephen, who I saw

was anxious to gain as much time as possible for the party most interested in the affair.

“You must come with me, Mr. O’Leary, to the station, and tell your story, and if the Irishman believes it, I’m sure I’m satisfied.”

“With all my heart. But I suppose there’s no great hurry about the matter ; an hour’s time will answer all our purposes. Sit down and take a drop to drive the cold from your stomachs, and then I’ll be after giving you the benefit of my company.”

The serjeant consented, but first took the precaution of sending two of the men to Hammer-smith, to carry off Stephen’s namesake, if indeed that gentleman had not already carried off himself. The other policeman remained.

Mrs. O’Leary, having laid the decanter on the table, withdrew.

The brandy was scarcely tasted : the men were too cautious.

“Have you had a fall, sir ?” asked he who had not yet spoken, fixing his eyes on my vest, which I had, smeared as it was with dirt and stained

with blood, unthinkingly put on a few minutes before. I told him of the ill-treatment I had received on the previous night.

He asked me to describe the men, and I did so as well as I could.

In half-an-hour a cab was called, and Stephen, the serjeant, and myself, got inside, the other man having perched himself beside the driver.

In a few minutes we arrived at the station, and the "man from Galway" having been produced from the lock-up, he was asked if he could identify Stephen.

"Be my sowl and I can," said he, endeavouring to stand erect, and look my uncle steadily in the face; "that's Mr. Stephen O'Leary, of Knock-graffin Castle, county of Galway; but, though I'm proud to see him, or any one of his name, he's not the man I want on this present occasion."

"Who do you want then?" asked the Inspector on duty.

"Why, his uncle, to be sure. Didn't I tell yez he was at Hammer——something or another, and that I was going to take him, when, instead of

being assisted in the discharge of my duty, I'm impayded, (aye, you may take it down)—I say I'm impayded in it, and lugged off here, and locked up on a charge of being drunk and disorderly, and all sorts of humbug of that kind; and who knows but may be it's bringing me before the magistrates ye will be by-and-bye?"

"I think it highly probable," said the inspector, drily.

"There's English justice for you!" exclaimed the excited constable. "Arrah! to the divil I pitch you all, body and bones, and the 'sarvice' into the bargain! Stand off my toes, young man, and you, sarjint, don't be leaning on me in that manner! I must respectfully refuse the gratuitous use of my shoulder for such a purpose. Bedad, maybe he'll consthrue that into a praymeditated assault, accompanied with personal violence. Give us your hand, Mr. Stephen; I'm glad to see you, and I'm glad, too, and I don't care who knows it that your uncle's off, and safe out of harm's way."

Notwithstanding this latter assertion, the words were delivered *sotto voce* to Stephen and myself,

"Is he off, then?" asked my uncle, in a whisper.

"Oh, clever and clare. Do you think Timothy O'Shaughnessy is a man to take advantage of one of the ould stock?"

"Then the drinking was——"

"All in my eye, that I might get locked up, and set those devils on the wrong scent. I suppose they'll give me lave to brush my hat. Let them and welcome."

In a few minutes the two officers returned with the intelligence that the Hammersmith O'Leary was fled, and Stephen and I soon afterwards returned home.

I walked to business as usual that morning, and with the intention of leaving as early as possible in the day, posting my letters to Stephen and Mr. Roberts, and then starting by the first train I could catch for Liverpool, there to take ship for New York.

It was ten o'clock when I got to the office, and the first thing that struck me on entering was the death-like stillness which prevailed. The shutters

had not been taken down, and the place was almost in utter darkness. I groped my way towards the inner offices, from which I perceived a light proceeded, and soon found myself in the presence of a group of men and boys with corpse-like faces upon which the gas flared down with a hideous effect. Two men stood apart from the rest with their hats on, the collars of their coats pulled up about their ears, and their umbrellas in their hands. These men were Mr. Snaggs and Mr. Rogers, who had evidently entered only a short time before me.

“What is the matter?” I asked, in some alarm.

“Oh, George, such a terrible occurrence,” said Jackson, with a white face and staring eyes; “poor Mr. Loader!”

“What of him?”

“He was murdered last night.”

“Good God!” I exclaimed, starting back in horror; “it cannot be! I parted with him at the corner of Hanover-street at half-past ten, when he took his way homewards.”

“It’s too true,” said another, coming forward;

“his body was found late last night, cold and stiff, in Gower-street.”

“This is dreadful! Has anyone been arrested?”

“Not yet,” said Mr. Rogers, “but the police are already actively at work, and we expect Mr. Roberts here presently.”

“And where is the body?” I asked, with emotion.

“In a public-house not far from where it was found, in the charge of the police.”

“Have you seen it, sir?”

“No,” said Mr. Rogers; “I have but this moment heard of the occurrence, but even were it otherwise, I don’t think I could look at the corpse of my dear old friend.”

“How was he murdered?”

“By stabbing, it is supposed; there’s a deep wound in the thigh, and another right through the heart, which the doctor says must have caused instant death.”

“You saw him last night, George, did you not?” said Mr. Snaggs, who stood quietly by, leaning on his umbrella.

"Yes, sir, we walked some distance together from Mr. Roberts's."

"Oh, indeed! What hour was that?"

"We left at half-past nine, and we parted about an hour afterwards. Mr. Rentoul was with us as far as Charing Cross."

"Then I think you will both be examined at the inquest, which, no doubt, will take place as soon as possible; but here comes Mr. Roberts."

"This is frightful!" said that gentleman, as he came in, accompanied by Dorricks; "it is really horrible! Give me the particulars as clearly and quickly as you can."

"It is terrible beyond expression," said Dorricks, when the particulars had been given; "a more dreadful affair I never heard of in my life. Dear, good old Mr. Loader, what wrong had he ever done mankind to draw upon him the knife of the assassin?"

"Robbery could hardly have been the motive," said one of the young men, "for his watch and a small sum of money had been left upon his person untouched."

"It is a shocking mystery," said Mr. Roberts, "but God's all-seeing eye is upon the murderer, and he will not long escape."

"Have the police been communicated with?" asked Dorricks.

"It was they who communicated with us," replied Jackson.

"And the murder was committed in Gower-street, you say," continued Dorricks; "strange that no cries or struggling were heard by the inhabitants!"

"How do we know but such may not have been heard?" muttered Snaggs; "none of the people in the neighbourhood have yet been examined."

"I stand corrected, Mr. Snaggs," and Dorricks bowed.

Graham now entered, and heard with the deepest and truest emotions of the murder.

The police soon began to arrive; Mr. Rentoul was sent for; and every necessary arrangement made for the inquest, which was fixed for twelve o'clock the next day. Business was, of course, suspended; we hastily left the premises, and the

place soon became as dark, gloomy, and silent as the grave itself.

For the present, then, my own plans must be laid aside, and nothing remained but to wait with patience the coming morrow.

It was five o'clock that evening when I left Cannon-street, and directed my steps homeward. I walked quickly, neither looking to the right hand nor to the left, for my mind was too completely and painfully occupied to heed the various monitions I received "to mind where I was walking,"—"to keep my own side of the path,"—"not to run down people," &c., &c. I heard nothing but the shrieks of the murdered man, as the ruffian bared his knife, and saw nothing but the life-blood welling from the wounds.

I reached my uncle's door as the clock struck six, and had just raised my hand and knocked when I caught sight of my friend the policeman, who had noticed my bloody vest that morning, walking slowly on the opposite side of the street, with his eyes steadily fixed upon me.

He made no attempt at concealing himself; on

the contrary, he nodded pleasantly across at me, and said something which I could not catch.

Stephen and Mrs. O'Leary had heard the news, and were overwhelmed with horror and dismay. I observed that the former spoke but little, seemed greatly depressed, and often looked towards me during the night with a heavy, laboured sigh. Biddy was quite the other way, and talked of nothing but the murder, and the estimable and amiable qualities of the murdered; but I saw that she spoke with an effort.

When I rose in the morning, and descended to the parlour, I found Stephen walking rapidly to and fro, with his hands behind his back. He had not lain down during the night, and his hair was tossed, his dress disordered, and his face pale, careworn, and dejected. I expressed surprise at his appearance, when he stated that the events of the day had quite unstrung his nerves: that he could not rest, but would be all right by-and-bye.

He then tried to converse cheerfully, but failed; drank a half glass of brandy in some strong coffee, with the view of tranquillising himself; took up

the paper and pretended to read, and made equally abortive efforts to appear at ease.

Eleven o'clock came, and we took our hats. Mrs. O'Leary came in at the moment; tears were in her eyes, and they trickled down her dear honest face, and she grasped my hand with an energy I could not understand. "Farewell," said she, with a fervour that went to my heart, "and may God watch over you now and for evermore."

Farewell! How that word rang in my ears, as I passed down the busy street! how, again, it rang in my ears, months afterwards, in the darkness of a felon's cell!

Stephen leaned heavily on me as we walked along, and I remarked that his step was slow, feeble, and uncertain. What weighed upon the poor fellow's mind a few minutes will show.

The body of Loader had been removed to an obscure public-house not more than thirty or forty yards from where it had been found, and thither we directed our steps. We saw several policemen outside the door, keeping the passage clear, and

answering all questions put to them in a short, gruff, and strictly official manner. Some of them recognised us, and we were allowed to pass in unquestioned. Among the crowd, and still with his eye upon me, was the policeman of the previous evening. He had watched us from the house.

We found some sixty or seventy persons crowded together in a small, dirty, ill-ventilated room, originally constructed to hold about one-third of that number. Mr. Roberts, Dorricks, and Graham were already there, together with Messrs. Rogers and Snaggs, and a few of the principal clerks and assistants. Jackson and some others slipped in a few minutes afterwards. We all conversed together in low, earnest tones, and many a mournful glance was directed towards the adjoining room, where we knew our poor friend's body lay.

Nearly one hour elapsed before the coroner made his appearance, and then he looked red and fussy, and very much like a man who was anxious to make up for lost time by proceeding to business at once. He therefore had a sweep, a bricklayer,

two navvies, a cobbler, a musician, an auctioneer, a tailor, a stable-boy, a cutler, and two shopmen lugged forcibly in, and notwithstanding their manifest objection to the whole proceeding, sworn and told to sit down. All this having been accomplished in somewhere about twenty minutes, the coroner proceeded briefly and rapidly to state for what purpose they were there that day—namely, to determine whether the man, whose body they would be called on presently to view, had come by his death through violence, and if so, by whose hands. He did not think he ought to detain them with any remarks of his own; they seemed quite uncalled-for and out of place. It would be an insult to the highly respectable and intelligent gentlemen before him to suppose for a moment that any were necessary: they knew their duty, and would honestly and faithfully discharge it by delivering a verdict in accordance with the evidence and the dictates of their own conscience.

The coroner's brevity, as well as his complimentary allusion to the intelligence and respectability of the jurors, seemed hugely to delight the

"foreman," who happened to be the sweep, and he stood up and gravely bowed his thanks for self and fellows.

They then withdrew to view the body, but returned in a minute or two afterwards, looking pale and terrified, the sweep himself included.

As they resumed their seats I felt Stephen's grasp tighten on my arm till I was forced to wince from very pain.

"Keep close to me, boy!" he whispered;
"keep close to me!"

"What is the matter, uncle?"

"Nothing! Keep close to me—don't move till you're wanted."

"Certainly not. I suppose I shall be examined."

"I fear so."

"Fear so?"

"Hush! they begin."

The first person who was examined was a gentleman named Armstrong, an extensive jeweller, who deposed to seeing the body of the murdered man lying about mid-way in Gower-

street on the night of Tuesday last, between the hours of eleven and twelve o'clock, p.m., with the head resting on the kerbstone, and the legs and body in an oblique position in the gutter. He thought the man was drunk, but on going to lift or rouse him, found to his horror that he was quite dead and almost soaked in blood. He called loudly for help, and a policeman coming up, they raised the body, and found a deep wound in the region of the heart, another in the lower part of the thigh, and a third in the centre of the forehead, and extending down almost to the nose. He knocked up a surgeon who lived a few yards off, and that gentleman having examined the body, at once pronounced life extinct. Mr. Armstrong having stated that that was all he knew about the matter, withdrew.

The policeman alluded to was next sworn, and after being reminded by the coroner "that he didn't want to sit there all night," proceeded to give his evidence at such a break-neck pace that the jury once or twice, notwithstanding their "respectability and intelligence," recommended

him to take a little more time and speak a little more distinctly, which recommendation seemed to have a contrary effect to that intended, for I saw the sweep shake his head in quite a helpless manner, and the reporters look up from their notebooks in mute despair. His evidence, as well as it could be understood, substantially corroborated that of the jeweller; the only material difference being as to the hour, the constable asserting that it was only a quarter-past eleven when summoned by the gentleman to his assistance—not twenty minutes to twelve, as stated.

When asked whether he had heard any screams previous to Mr. Armstrong calling, he said “No;” that he had been in Gower-street half-an-hour previously, and had just passed round Bedford-square, when he was alarmed by cries of “Police!”

The surgeon was next examined as to the character of the wounds, which, as already stated, were three in number. One in the left breast, passing completely through the heart, and causing, as he believed, instant death; a second in the

thigh, dividing the femoral artery, and which in itself would have proved fatal. The third was in the forehead, and this perhaps was the most remarkable though less dangerous wound of all. The blow was aimed, as he believed, with the intention of piercing the brain, and was given with such force that the point of the weapon (whatever it may have been) snapped off from the blade and remained firmly stuck in the eye-bone to the depth of half-an-inch or little more. This he had since extracted from the wound, and, in his opinion, was part of a new, well-finished dagger.

The portion of steel was then handed to the juryman cutler, who stated that the dagger was evidently new; adding, with true tradesman-like jealousy—"that as to the finish, he could not at all agree with the last witness, and was willing to sell him any day such a weapon for half-a-crown or three shillings."

The cutler having said so much, fumbled in his waistcoat pocket for some time, and looked as if he were about to produce his "trade card" for the benefit of the surgeon; but was stopped by the

coroner asking if there was any other evidence to be produced, and if not, that he was prepared to address a few words to the jury, whose respectability and intelligence, &c., &c.

There was a pause, and then the detective rose.

"The case is only beginning, sir," said he, in clear, ringing tones—"the murderer has yet to be committed for trial."

"The murderer! ah, yes, to be sure," coincided the coroner, looking a little confused. "Bless my soul, I had quite forgotten him! Where is he?—put him forward."

A hand was laid upon *my* shoulder, and a voice bade me "Stand up."

Bewildered and amazed, I mechanically obeyed, while Stephen sank back in his seat, and covering his face with his hands, groaned aloud.

"Now, then, what is the charge against that young man?" asked the coroner.

"Mr. Coroner," said a gentleman, rising, whom I had not before observed—"Mr. Coroner, I am here to watch the proceedings on behalf of the family of the murdered man. I have only this

moment had my instructions, as the police, in their anxiety to do everything very cleverly and secretly, have not thought it proper to give us, the parties most deeply and painfully interested in the matter, the slightest hint of their intention to prefer, in this early stage of the proceedings, a charge of wilful murder against anyone. Had they done so we should have come prepared, but as it is we labour under a serious disadvantage, and so, doubtless, does the young man who now stands before you, and who has, I believe, up to the present borne a most irreproachable character. Under all the circumstances I must respectfully ask of you to adjourn the inquest for half-an-hour, in order that I may clearly understand the grounds upon which this charge is made, as well as to enable the person charged to procure any legal assistance he may deem necessary."

The coroner, seeing that there was no likelihood of the inquiry terminating for some time, gave an ungracious assent, and then retired from the room—to lunch at the "Wellington," as some one said aloud.

"What is all this, uncle?" I exclaimed, turning to Stephen. Tell me, in God's name, what have I done?—with what am I charged?"

He raised his head, and the one word "murder" issued from his white lips.

"Murder?"

"Murder!"

"But of whom? Not of——"

"Yes," said Stephen, interrupting me; "of him."

"Oh! it cannot be," I exclaimed, "it is too horrible! where are the proofs?"

"Alas, my poor boy, you are the victim of circumstances so strong that did I not know you as I know myself, I would not hesitate to convict you upon them."

"But what are they—where are they?" I asked.

"They were under my roof; they are now in that policeman's hands."

"And they are?"

"Your waistcoat, a cheque for one hundred pounds, drawn in favour of poor Loader, or bearer; your letters to Roberts and myself,

dated the very morning of the murder, in which you speak of quitting London for ever ; again, and most important of all, the murdered man was last seen alive in your company ; and oh ! unhappy combination of fatal circumstances, your umbrella was found beside his body !”

“ Great God !” I cried in hopeless agony, “ then I am lost.”

“ Do not give way,” replied O’Leary hurriedly ; “ summon up all your courage, all your resolution, and meet this charge like a man.”

At this moment Mr. Roberts, Graham, Dorricks, and some others crossed the room to where we were sitting.

Mr. Roberts was the first to speak.

“ George, the turn things have taken has astonished us. Who could think of such a charge ? We all believe you innocent, and have no doubt of your instant acquittal. How came you to be in this position ?”

“ Oh, Mr. Roberts, circumstances are strongly and cruelly against me. Even you will believe me guilty when you hear the evidence.”

"Oh, nonsense! said Graham, hastily, "Guilty! I would as soon believe myself, or, what is more, you, uncle, guilty, as George Allen? Depend upon it, it will all be explained presently."

"I hope and pray that it may be so," said Dorricks, fervently. "Circumstances may be strong against you, but, believe me, your innocence will yet be made clear as the sun that now shines."

"I think you had better get some legal assistance," suggested Mr. Roberts. "You will scarcely be able to speak for yourself."

I turned round to whisper to Stephen, but he was gone.

We were now joined by Mr. Rogers and Mr. Snaggs; and they, in common with those who had already spoken, seemed quite unable to understand why such a charge was preferred against me.

By direction of the police, they resumed their seats at the other end of the room, and I was left alone, but closely watched, and all avenues of escape (had I thought of such) were jealously barred against me.

What a situation was mine! An hour ago and

I had entered that room with the intention of giving evidence, and aiding, if possible, in bringing to justice the perpetrators of this savage murder ; and here I now found myself charged with that horrid crime itself, openly, and boldly ; and that too, under circumstances, which must, I feared, carry conviction with them.

That detective officer, who stood beside me with a smile of triumph on his face, evidently suspected me from the moment his face first rested upon me at O'Leary's. His pointed questions, his grave demeanour, his refusal to drink, his dogging me from Roberts's home, and subsequently from home to the place where I now sat, plainly showed that he had strong suspicion of my guilt.

Then, again, he must have searched the house in my absence, and taken from it the vest, cheque, and other things which, in the eyes of most men, and perhaps in the eyes of the law itself, would be considered damning evidence of my guilt. This was why poor Stephen was so disturbed, and it likewise accounted for Mrs. O'Leary's earnest prayer for my safety and protection.

My position was indeed an awful one, and silently I lifted up my heart to Almighty God, beseeching Him that, in His own good time, He would be pleased to extricate me from it.

The coroner returned in little better than half-an-hour, and shortly afterwards Stephen made his appearance accompanied by a gentleman who I guessed was a lawyer.

I was now put forward, and the case formally proceeded with.

The first witness was Mr. Roberts.

His examination was a short one.

He deposed to Mr. Loader being at his house on the evening of his death for the purpose of having a deed of partnership drawn up between himself and witness. That deed was drawn up accordingly, and deceased left about half-past nine o'clock in company with Mr. Rentoul, a stockbroker, and Mr. George Allen. He (witness) never saw him again alive.

Stephen Dorricks was next examined, and his evidence went merely to corroborate that of Mr. Roberts as to the drawing-up of the deed, the hour

at which Loader left Tudor Lodge, and with whom.

In reply to my counsel (for such was the stranger brought in by Stephen) they both stated that they were quite unaware of any unkind feeling existing between the murdered man and the accused, but that, on the contrary, they always appeared to be on terms of the closest and most affectionate intimacy with each other, and that they were totally at a loss to conceive any motive on the part of the prisoner for committing the crime imputed to him. Mr. Roberts added that a day or two before the occurrence the unfortunate deceased had recommended Allen as a fit and proper person to succeed him in a post of trust in the establishment, and that he (Allen) was aware of the fact.

The next witness was Mr. Rentoul.

He stated that he left Mr. Roberts's house on the night in question in company with Mr. Loader and Mr. Allen. It was then nearly ten o'clock. He walked with them as far as Charing Cross, where he shook hands with both and parted, they

turning up the Strand, and he getting into a cab to be driven to his residence at Brompton. There was nothing remarkable in the manner or appearance of either. They seemed like old and attached friends. Mr. Loader had a thin cane or walking-stick in his hand, from which hung a silk tassel a little frayed at the ends. Believes the stick now produced to be the same. Mr. Allen carried an umbrella. Would not know that umbrella again. Mr. Allen was a stranger to him, but he had known the deceased for thirty years or upwards. Has no doubt that the body lying in the adjoining room is his.

The cabman, James Morris, was then called and examined.

“You remember the night of Tuesday, the 11th inst.?”

“I do.”

“State how you were engaged on that evening.”

“I did not go out till half-past eight, my wife being laid up with——”

“Stop, my good man. Now let me caution you at the outset that we don’t want to hear

anything about your wife or what she was laid up with. Answer my questions, and let her alone. How were you employed on that night?"

"Driving 'fares' one place and another!"

"Do you consider that a satisfactory answer to my question?"

"Of course I do."

"Of course you do! Now, be kind enough, Mr. Morris, to remember that you are here to answer questions in a straightforward and proper manner, and that impertinence in any shape or form will not be tolerated."

"I ain't impertinent," growled Mr. Morris.

"But you are impertinent," thundered the coroner, coming to the assistance of his friend, the counsel. "Do you think I don't know?"

Jehu hung his head, and looked a little alarmed. "Of course a coroner ought to know."

"Now, sir, for the third time," said the counsel, adjusting his wig, and looking fiercely at the witness; "how were you engaged on the night in question? Hold up your head, and direct your answers to the coroner and jury."

"I drove a 'fare' to Kennington about nine o'clock, and picked up another at——"

"What do you mean by 'picked up?'" shouted the coroner, getting very red in the face. "Take care how you use any of your slang phrases here sir. I'll not permit it."

"Quite right," said the counsel, nodding approvingly.

"Why, a gentleman hailed me——"

"Have I not already told you, cabman," interrupted the coroner, with forced calmness, "not to use any of your low expressions here, and yet you continue to persist in them. Now, let me tell you that if your mind is made up to occupy my time, and the time of this respectable and intelligent jury, and that of those equally respectable and intelligent persons whom I see around me after this fashion, it will be my duty to commit you to prison for a month, as one of the most thorough-paced scoundrels I ever met with in my life, and as one who, being in the service of an enlightened but too often credulous public, has basely prostituted his calling by withholding

evidence which may be of a most material nature, and seeking by every means in his power to restrict and impede the free course of justice."

These were hard and unintelligible words, so poor "cabby" could only scratch his head and look bewildered.

"Now," said the counsel, returning to the charge with another ominous pull at his wig; "now, my man, bear in mind the caution the coroner has given you, and conduct yourself better during the remainder of your examination. Put your hat upon the table, and leave off scratching your head, and give us no more of that wife of yours that you say is laid up, and all such ridiculous improbabilities. You say a gentleman called you—called you where?"

"At Westminster Bridge, your honour," said Morris, with alacrity, as this loophole of escape presented itself.

"Don't 'honour' me, sir, but attend to my questions. What did this gentleman say to you?"

"He asked me my fare to Moorgate-street."

"Well, what did you say to him?"

"I said two bob."

"Two what?"

"Two shillings, I mean,"—and if Jehu had driven horse, cab, fare and all over the bridge and into the river, he couldn't have looked more terrified or guilty.

"You told him two shillings was your fare from Westminster Bridge to Moorgate-street. Good! What next?"

"All right!" said the fare; "drive on."

"Well, and did you drive on?"

"Of course I did."

"There's no 'of course' about it at all. You might have driven, or you might not have driven. Which did you do?"

"I drove!"

"You drove! You swear you drove?"

"I swear I drove."

"Don't play upon my words, sir—I warn you, don't attempt it, or it may be worse for you. A more equivocating, hang-dog sort of witness, Mr. Coroner, I never met with in the whole course of

my professional career," exclaimed the counsel, who was beginning, I think, to feel that Mr. Morris was too much for him.

"Let him beware," said the coroner, with a frown.

"You drove this gentleman to Moorgate-street? —he paid you?"

"Yes, he paid me."

"And having paid you, did he say anything particular?"

"No, except to wish me good-night."

"Good-night is nothing particular, and you know it. Answer my question without reservation or qualification of any kind whatsoever. Did he say anything particular to you? Yes, or no."

"No!"

"I really object to this mode of examining the witness," said my counsel, whose name was Flareup, rising and speaking for the first time. "I have hitherto refrained from interrupting my learned friend, but he must know that his proceeding is quite irregular, as well as that the

witness is really giving every information in his power."

"Withholding, you mean," retorted the other.

"As yet you have asked him no question of importance. You are unnecessarily occupying the time of the coroner and jury, and leaving us nothing but shadows to fight with."

The coroner looked pleased with this remark of Flareup's, and nodded his approval accordingly.

"I will give you substance presently," said Fumer, the other counsel, drawing his gown tightly about him, and looking as grim and defiant as possible. "Now, my red-headed friend, having driven the gentleman to Moorgate-street, and received your fare, the amount of which you tell me, in your own peculiarly vulgar style, was 'two bob,' what did you do next?"

"I drove back again."

"Back again, where?"

"Towards Charing Cross."

"Well!"

"At this stage of the proceedings 'cabby' fell once more to scratching his head, an operation

which appeared to afford him unmitigated satisfaction.

"What do you mean by that sir?" questioned Fumer.

"Mean by that, sir—mean by what, sir?"

"Why don't you answer my question?"

"You didn't ask me any, as I knows on," said "cabby," with imperturbable gravity.

"Hem! What occurred on your way to Charing Cross?"

"As I was passing Wellington-street, I heard a voice shouting 'Cab.'"

"You heard a voice shouting 'Cab,'—very good! Go on."

"I shouted in return, 'Yes, sir,' and, turning the mare's head, trotted up a bit of the street, when I saw a gentleman standing on the flag-way, and beckoning me to pull up."

"In what state was this gentleman?"

"In a sober state, sir."

"What state as to his dress?—that's what I mean."

"He was covered with blood and dirt."

"Mark that, gentlemen of the jury—covered with blood and dirt! What did this gentleman do?"

"He jumped into the cab."

"What else?"

"Nothing else!"

"What did he say, then?"

"He told me to drive to —— street, and to be quick, as he intended to give me double fare."

"What were the precise words?"

"Well, they were summat like what I've said."

"Give me the exact words," roared Fumer.

"I can't" replied Morris, trying to look puzzled.

"Try!"

"It u'd be no use. If you was to keep me here till next Midsummer," he added, with sudden energy, "I couldn't do it."

"I think we must refresh his memory, Mr. Coroner," said Fumer, smiling awfully.

"Again I must interfere," interrupted Flareup. "The witness has given you the substance of what the person said who jumped into his cab, and he confesses his inability to do more. It is too bad that he must be bullied in this way."

"Very well! This gentleman asked you to drive him at an unusually quick pace, and this was accompanied by the offer of a double fare, Is it so?"

"Yes!"

"Did it seem to you extraordinary that——"

"Don't answer that question," said Fumer; "I object to witness being asked what he thought,"

"Very well, then; I will not press it."

"You drove, of course, at a rapid pace?"

"I did!"

"Quicker than usual?"

"Yes, quicker than usual."

"What was the hour when you left him at his destination?"

"Half-past eleven, or thereabouts."

"What do you mean by 'thereabouts'?"

The man was silent.

"Will you answer my question?"

"Why, it might have been five minutes one way or the other; it couldn't have been more."

"Why couldn't it have been more?"

"Because I drove home the moment I set down

the gentleman, and when I opened my own door, says one of the children to me, 'Father, mother is——' "

"Another word about that wife and children of yours," said the coroner, rising in wrath, "and I'll commit you for contempt. A pretty fellow you are to be parading your family in this way before a respectable and intelligent jury!"

James Morris looked conscience-stricken. He had been guilty of the frightful crime of incidentally mentioning his wife and children before a coroner and twelve honest fellow-countrymen.

"Now look round you," continued the counsel, "and try if you can point out the man you drove on the night of Tuesday, the 11th instant.

Morris looked round, and round, and round again, until the patience of the coroner was quite exhausted, and then with a sigh of relief he suffered his eyes to rest meekly upon the countenance of Fumer.

"Now, sir!" said that gentleman, impatiently.

"Well, sir?" was the almost sheepish reply.

"Do you see him?"

"Who, sir?"

"'Who, sir?' Why, the man you drove that night."

"I drove three men that night, sir."

"Mr. Coroner, this man is trifling with us."

"He must be made an example of," said that gentleman, looking hard at Mr. Morris.

"You hear that, sir. You're to be made an example of, and richly you deserve it, for a greater malefactor it never was my lot to encounter. Now tell me, do you see gentleman No. 3 in this room?"

"I do," said the malefactor.

"Put your hand upon his head."

In a moment the cold, trembling hand of James Morris was laid upon mine.

"You may go down, sir," said Fumer, with a gratified smile.

"Wait a moment, James Morris," said Flareup to that individual, who, with his head down, was now beating a hasty retreat. "You state that this is the person you drove on the night in question, and we are not disposed to dispute the accuracy of that statement; on the contrary, we

frankly and freely admit it. Now tell me, was the gentleman flurried or excited?"

"Neither."

"Was he frightened?"

"He didn't look so."

"He didn't look so. Good! The night was wet, I believe?"

"It was beginning to rain when he called me."

"Precisely, and he was naturally anxious to get home quickly.

"Yes."

"You are very ready with your replies now, Mr. Morris," growled Fumer; "but I've my eye upon you—remember that!"

How innocent was the expression of Mr. Morris's face; he seemed not to understand Mr. Fumer.

"I protest against the witness being intimidated," interposed Flareup, hastily; "keep your eyes to yourself, Mr. Fumer, and let him alone.—Now, sir, allow me to ask you one question: Are there blinds to your cab?"

"Yes."

“ Did he pull them down ? ”

“ No. ”

“ Could he have done so ? ”

“ Certainly ; there was nothing to prevent him. ”

“ “ There was nothing to prevent him ”—exactly ! Are there steps before the house to which you drove him ? ”

“ Yes. ”

“ How many ? ”

“ I don't know—eight or ten, perhaps. ”

“ Did he *run* up the steps ? ”

“ No. ”

“ What *did* he do ? ”

“ *Walked* them up, and made me walk up too ; and that gentleman that's standing beside him brought me into the parlour, and gave me a glass of Irish whiskey. ”

“ Did this young man appear to have any desire to conceal his face from you ? ”

“ None. ”

“ How long were you in the room. ”

“ About two minutes. ”

"Was he there all that time?"

"Yes ; all that time."

"Did he explain, to his friend beside him there, how he came to be in the state in which you found him?"

"He did. He said he had been struck and knocked down by two men."

"Where?"

"In Bow-street."

"That will do, Mr. Morris. I have done with you."

"That fellow will be hanged yet," muttered Fumer, as Morris, with a roguish leer at that gentleman, walked out of the room.

Stephen next tendered himself for examination, and gave his evidence with a clearness, an accuracy, and a straightforwardness that created a warm impression in his favour. It did not, however, materially affect the case.

The detective next stood forward, and his evidence was conclusive. He was a man of few words, but these words fell with an awful weight upon the ears and hearts of all present. He did

not utter one syllable that could have been questioned by Stephen or any other friend, no matter how sincere or attached. I looked to Flareup when the vest, cheque, and umbrella were produced, and I saw that his countenance had fallen ; the man's statement, he plainly saw, could not be controverted, and he suffered him to depart without any attempt at cross-examination.

The last witness was a cutler, who had sold a dagger a few days before to a man who stated that he wanted the weapon for some amateur theatricals, where he was to play the first murderer in Macbeth, a part which he greatly liked. The piece of steel produced seemed to belong to that weapon ; it was very finely pointed, and had a slight flaw on the blade. The price of the dagger was four-and-sixpence.

"Too much," muttered his brother chip from the jury-box, unable to restrain himself.

He was asked, could he identify the man ?

He shook his head. It was between day and dark, and, as he had not at the time turned on the gas, he did not even distinguish his features.

Flareup ridiculed the idea of bringing forward such a witness, and asked Fumer why he did not produce every cutler in London who sold daggers within the last few days?

He then hazarded a bold question. "Does the figure of the man now before you at all resemble the figure of him who purchased the dagger?"

"Not at all!"

"In what respect do they differ?"

"The man to whom I sold the dagger was taller, I should say, by three inches."

This closed the evidence, and after the usual sparring and fencing, and speechifying by counsel on both sides, the coroner went through it in the accustomed way, commenting as he went along—particularly on that of poor Morris, whose license was to be cancelled, if he (the coroner) could by any means manage it.

The jury did not take long to consider their verdict; it did not need it, everything was too plain.

"We find," said the sweep, "that Edward Loader came by his death from wounds inflicted by

a dagger, or some such weapon, upon the night of Tuesday, the 11th inst., in Gower-street, or its neighbourhood. And we further find that those wounds were inflicted by George Allen, the prisoner at the bar, whom we now pronounce Guilty of Wilful Murder."

There was an audible murmur throughout the room ; low, subdued expressions of sympathy and sorrow ; hard, earnest, almost violent grasps of the hand ; an opening and closing of doors ; a sudden shutting out of light, and George Allen of yesterday is now, in the eyes of the world, George Allen the *murderer*.

CHAPTER VII.

A SHORT CHAPTER PREPARTORY TO A LONG ONE.

I WAS now in prison and awaiting my trial, which was to take place, as I had been informed, in about six weeks from the date of my committal.

The Crown had evidently considered the case one of great importance, and the Attorney and Solicitor Generals were instructed to prosecute. Evidence in every presentable shape and form was being hunted up, and my antecedents fully and freely inquired into. No stone was left unturned to get up a "case;" the police were indefatigable (would that the police of 1867 were equally so) in their exertions, and not a single link seemed wanting to complete the chain of evidence.

Nor were my friends idle. Stephen, poor fellow, worked day and night, seldom lying down even for

an hour, and never undressing during the time that intervened between my committal and trial.

He had secured the services of three of the most eminent men at the bar, upon whose ability and judgment he could depend, and one of whom at this moment, and I am thankful to say it, adorns the Bench.

By a strange, though not very happy coincidence, Mr. Knox Budgett was our attorney, and to my mind he looked uglier and more unprepossessing than ever. He had now become a grey, withered old man; crabbed, bent, and feeble; with an unsteady, and, as I thought, slightly palsied step. In all other respects, however, he was the Mr. Knox Budgett of fifteen years before. I found his mind young, fresh, and vigorous (how very unlike his body!), and he remembered perfectly the unfortunate action against the Insurance Company.

On reviewing my own case, he frankly owned that circumstances were against us, and that strong circumstantial evidence was all that was necessary to convict a man of an alleged crime, no matter

how great its magnitude. All, however, that skill and ability could do would be done, and if that skill and ability could only create a doubt in the minds of the jury, then acquittal would be certain.

This was not very consoling, it must be confessed. Mr. Budgett looked at the matter in a hard, legal sort of way; received the evidence given at the inquest in quite a professional manner, examining the strong as well as the weak side; collecting, like a good general, his own scattered forces, and arranging them in the best possible manner to receive the enemy's attack, and, if an opportunity presented itself, dealing him a death-blow.

During all our conversations—and we had five or six of them—Mr. Budgett never once alluded to the question of my guilt or innocence—that he utterly and entirely ignored; I might have been the most innocent or guilty man alive, for all he knew or cared. To know or care was not his business; to cause a witness to break down in his evidence, and so procure an acquittal, was. He was paid to do a certain thing, and that certain thing

he would endeavour to do, even though it were as plain as the sunlight of heaven that I had murdered fifty Edward Loaders instead of one.

Mr. Rogers visited me as often as he could, and so, indeed, did Mr. Snaggs, from whom I received more kindness and sympathy than I gave him credit for possessing. Jackson called once, and was so shocked at my altered appearance that I did not see him again. I was not sorry for this either ! for whilst he was with me he was more like a maniac than a rational being, talking at random, laughing out of place, and making the most horrible and grotesque grimaces imaginable.

I saw Mr. Roberts and Dorricks twice, and whilst both expressed their strong belief in my innocence, recommended me to get the very best legal assistance, and to prepare to meet, in a satisfactory manner, the evidence that would be brought against me. This was followed by the offer of pecuniary assistance, which, however, I declined.

Mr. Roberts was kind, it is true, but not quite so cordial as I had expected. In offering assist-

ance, he appeared to act rather from a sense of duty than from any other feelings. I was perplexed and distressed, and I thought of the evening of Loader's murder, and his sudden change of manner and intentions; and then with such thoughts came others, and Eveleen, the daughter of the one man, and the betrothed of the other, again filled my soul.

In the darkness of my felon cell I laid my head against its felon walls, and wept till I feared my heart would break. The old wound had burst forth anew, and again I seemed ready to curse God and die."

Stephen and Mrs. O'Leary were permitted to visit me every day, and I need not say how much of hope and consolation they brought with them. Graham, too, was often with me, and always spoke hopefully and cheerfully.

The day before that appointed for my trial at length came. Stephen had been with me from an early hour, and talking over all that had been, done, and the day was fast drawing to a close

when, in obedience to a signal from one of the officers of the prison, he rose to depart.

Hardly, however, had the door closed behind him, and the noise of the bolts died away, when the man again appeared.

“More visitors!” said he, gruffly; “time’s up, so anything that’s to be said must be said quickly, and in my presence.”

Two figures, cloaked and hooded, darkened the doorway. I advanced slightly to meet them, as the man drew back a pace or two, and the light from his lamp, flashing out for a moment, fell on the pale faces of Mrs. and Eveleen Roberts.

CHAPTER VIII.

MY TRIAL AND CONVICTION.

AT half-past ten on the morning of Thursday, the 20th of June, I was conducted into the "dock," guarded by a turnkey on either side. I looked around the court, and saw that every eye was fixed upon me—some in pity, some in sorrow, but the vast majority in mere senseless, vacant, idle curiosity.

At eleven o'clock, the judges, two in number, took their seats upon the bench; and the jury having been sworn with all the usual formalities, I was asked how I pleaded to the charge of murdering Edward Loader.

My answer was briefly, "Not Guilty."

A hand grasped mine, and I saw that Stephen was standing as close to me as the rules of the court admitted. And there he remained the entire

day, and was the principal channel of communication between Mr. Knox Budgett and myself.

The Attorney-General then rose to state the case for the Crown, which he did in a three hours' speech of great ability and moderation.

"My lords and gentlemen," said he, rising with much gravity in the midst of a crowded and now hushed court—"My lords, and gentlemen of the jury: I rise with feelings of sincere pain and sorrow, to perform one of the most solemn and awful duties that ever yet devolved upon a human being—the prosecution, it may be to conviction, and if so, assuredly to death, of a fellow man. A terrible responsibility, therefore, rests upon me, and, with God's blessing, I shall meet that responsibility, firmly but temperately, taking care that, whilst using all lawful means to bring the perpetrators of this foul deed to justice and deserved punishment, the innocent suffer not for the guilty. My lords, life once taken cannot be restored, therefore it behoves us to proceed with the greatest caution where that life is at stake. Better—far better, that ten thousand guilty men go free, and

live out their allotted time, undetected and unpunished, than one innocent man should undergo the extreme penalty of the law. This is the principle acknowledged and acted on in free, enlightened England; and there is not one that hears me this day who does not, in his heart, acknowledge that principle as righteous and just. We do not thirst for our brother's blood: we do not prepare the stake, and seek a victim. No? God forbid! If the prisoner at the bar be innocent of the crime with which he is charged, then I most earnestly and fervently pray that that innocence may be made apparent this day, and that he leave this court for the bosom of his family, unspotted and unstained. And, gentlemen, I will go even further than this, and tell you, under the correction of their lordships, that if, after having patiently heard, and thoroughly examined, and carefully sifted, the evidence I shall lay before you, there still remains in your minds one single doubt of the prisoner's guilt, then, no matter what the consequence may be, you must give him the benefit of that doubt, and, by

your verdict, restore him to life and liberty. A terrible power is now placed in your hands. Use it wisely, impartially, justly, mercifully : use it in such a way that when your own last hour comes, and the shadow of death flits about your bed, you can honestly, and without fear, lay your hand upon your heart, and say, ‘I acted in that case wholly and solely according to the dictates of my own conscience, uninfluenced by personal feelings of any kind whatever.

“Gentlemen, the innocent must not suffer, and as emphatically the *guilty must not escape*.

“So far as I am instructed, my case is a short one ; it lies within a narrow compass, and it shall be stated with as much brevity as a due regard to the facts connected with it will admit.

“Gentlemen, the young man before you, with the down not yet darkened upon his chin, is charged with the murder of Edward Loader, on the night of Tuesday, the 11th of May last ; and it is now my duty to lay before you the circumstances upon which this charge is based. You may already have seen (indeed, you could scarcely

have avoided seeing), an account, in the public prints, of this barbarous murder, and some of those prints have not hesitated to use strong expressions with reference to this unfortunate young man, ignorantly and presumptuously arrogating to themselves your office, and the office of their lordships, who now sit upon that bench. With all this, gentlemen, you have nothing to do; let it not weigh a feather's weight with you. If you have taken any of these too freely expressed opinions with you into that box, in God's name lay them aside, and act as if you had neither heard nor read them.

“Gentlemen, the murdered Loader was an old man, considerably over sixty, as I have been informed, and of a weak, delicate constitution. He had been in the employment for many years of Mr. James Roberts, a gentleman known to you all, and was by him much esteemed, and respected, and trusted. For over thirty years he had been a tried and faithful servant, rising step by step, till at last he reached the highest point of preferment. Happy would it have been for that good old man

had he then sought the quiet of his own home, and there enjoyed that peaceful retirement which his own integrity and honest worth had secured for him. But, gentlemen, this was not permitted; he had gathered his laurels in a peaceful strife, the weapons of which were truth and honour, and and they now rest with him in a bloody grave. Gentlemen, Mr. Roberts was grateful to his old servant, his old friend, and he determined that services like his should not go unrewarded. Gentlemen, he did what I wish many other English merchants would do—he made this patient, toiling, simple-minded, God-fearing servant, his partner. He told him of his intention, and invited him to his house, in order to have the deed of partnership drawn up and signed.

“Gentlemen, it will be shown in evidence that this poor, ill-fated man, with gratitude in his heart, went to the house of his benefactor on the night of his murder. After tea the “deed” was drawn up and signed in the presence of witnesses, and so he became a partner in the firm.

“Gentlemen, it will be proved to your satisfac-

tion that the only persons at Mr. Roberts's house on that night, with the exception of his wife and daughter, were the unfortunate deceased, Mr. Rentoul, a respectable stock-broker, some years retired; a gentleman named Dorricks, who resided in the house; and the prisoner at the bar, George Allen.

"Gentlemen, the deceased, Mr. Rentoul, and Allen left Mr. Robert's house between nine and ten o'clock on that night. Mr. Rentoul parted from his companions at Charing Cross, and proceeded on his way home, they taking their way up the Strand.

"Gentlemen, Loader separated from Rentoul in company with Allen, and was never again seen alive. Two or three hours afterwards he was found foully and brutally murdered in that longest, darkest, and gloomiest of all long, dark, and gloomy streets. Gentlemen, he was found murdered in Gower-street. He was found by a Mr. Armstrong, on his way home, who immediately gave the alarm. A policeman came, a surgeon was sent for, and he at once pronounced

the man dead. A cane used by the deceased was found beside him, and a yard or two further off an umbrella, dropped or forgotten by the murderer in his flight. Gentlemen, that umbrella was the property of George Allen. This will be proved to your full and entire satisfaction. Gentlemen, the body was found at the time named ; when the murder was actually committed we are unable to say. About half-past ten, however, a man covered with blood and dirt stood in Wellington-street, calling for a cab. A cab appeared in sight, drew up near the flagway, and this man jumps in, commands the driver to get on as quickly as possible, and accompanies this command with the promise of 'double fare.' Gentlemen, this man was George Allen also. Again, that very night, or rather early in the following morning, some police, through error, go to the house of a relative where this young man slept, and find Allen dressed in that blood-stained vest. The man suspects him, and, armed with a search-warrant, he returns to the house during the day, and finds—what do you think—gentlemen ? why, a cheque in deceased's

handwriting, and drawn in favour of Edward Loader or bearer, and dated 11th of May, a few hours, doubtless, before the murder. Two letters were also found in prisoner's handwriting, one addressed to Mr. Roberts, and the other to this relative, in which he stated his intention of leaving England at once and for ever. Strange that he should have formed such a resolution, and at such time!

“Now, gentlemen, be pleased to bear in mind all the facts I have laid before you. Allen was last seen with the deceased; his umbrella is found near the body, in a gutter, not very far from the scene where the tragedy was enacted; he is seen covered with blood and dirt; he jumped into a cab, and offered its owner a bribe to drive at a rapid pace; his house is subsequently searched, and in his pocket is found a cheque for £100, drawn by Loader himself, and on that very day; also two letters expressing his intention of quitting the country without delay. Now, gentlemen, I ask you to take all these facts into consideration, and reconcile them with the prisoner's innocence if you

can. It may be asked of me to show a motive for this man committing so brutal a crime. Gentlemen, I deny that I am bound to show any motive. He may have had strong and hidden ones; and as such known only to God and himself. But I do emphatically assert that the facts I have stated, if facts they be, and if every man who will be put upon that table to-day be not a perjurer, are utterly and entirely opposed to the notion of the prisoner's innocence. 'Facts are stubborn things,' and we must take them as we find them.

"Gentlemen, I have done. My duty has been discharged, imperfectly I know, but with thorough goodwill towards the unhappy accused, and nothing now remains but to call witnesses to bear out the statement I have just made."

The Attorney-General then sat down, and the examination of witnesses began. They were the same as at the inquest, and in most instances a very condensed report, taken from Stephen's notes of the trial, will be sufficient.

The first called was James Roberts, I merely give his cross-examination.

"Was Allen well known to deceased?"

"Yes."

"How long had he been known to him?"

"Ever since he entered the establishment."

"How long was that?"

"Five or six years, I should think."

"Are you aware of any ill-feeling having existed between them?"

"I am not."

"Is it, or is it not, a fact that the deceased was always most kind and encouraging to the prisoner at the bar?"

"It is a fact that he was so."

"Did the prisoner ever express, in your hearing, his gratitude for his kindness and encouragement."

"Yes, frequently."

"Was he a visitor at the house of the deceased?"

"I believe he was."

"A constant one!"

"I have reason to think so."

"The deceased was, of course, aware that he was about to become your partner?"

"I told him of my intention about a week before his murder."

"Did he recommend anyone to succeed him at the time?"

"He did."

"Who was that person?"

"The prisoner at the bar."

"Why did he do so?"

"Because he believed him to be a young man of industry and sterling worth."

"Did you think so too?"

"I did."

"And thinking so, you determined upon offering him the post?"

"Yes."

"Should you have done so had not deceased mentioned him?"

"I think I should."

"Why?"

"Because I believed him a man to be trusted."

"Then you did not think him capable of murder?"

"No; far from it."

"Was the prisoner aware of the interest deceased took in him?"

"Perfectly."

"Did he appear grateful?"

"Most grateful."

"Acting upon poor Loader's recommendation and your own judgment, you made the prisoner an offer of the post about to be vacated?"

"I did."

"Was that offer accepted?"

"No; declined."

"Then it is quite certain that he did not wish preferment?"

"Yes; perfectly."

"Are you aware that the prisoner would, in any way, have been benefitted by deceased's death?"

"No; I should rather say the reverse."

"You think, then, that it would have been more to his advantage had deceased lived."

"I do; decidedly."

"That will do: you may go down."

Dorricks was next examined, but his evidence established nothing beyond the fact of Loader

leaving Roberts's house on the night in question, in company with Mr. Rentoul and myself.

Stephen whispered something in my counsel's ear as Dorricks was leaving the witness-box, who merely nodded in reply, and then rising, said—

“I will just ask you one or two questions, Mr. Dorricks, if you please.”

Dorricks bowed calmly, and prepared to listen.

“You are, I believe, an inmate of Mr. Roberts's house!”

“I am.”

“You were one of the witnesses to the deed of partnership between that gentleman and the deceased?”

“I was.”

“You were a willing one, I presume?”

“A very willing one.”

“You have some interest, I believe, in the establishment!”

“None.”

“Oh, indeed!” And the counsel looked confused. “You slept that night—I mean, the night of the murder—in Mr. Roberts's house?”

“No.”

“Ah!”

And judge, jury, counsel, and auditors all stared.

“Did I hear you aright, Mr. Dorricks?”

Mr. Dorricks again bowed.

“Well, sir, as you did not sleep at Mr. Roberts’s house that night, as was your habit to do, perhaps you will tell us where you did sleep?”

“That I cannot: I did not sleep at all.”

“Ah! ah! you were particularly restless, I suppose, and sat up in an arm-chair—eh?”

“I confess you are near the truth,” said Dorricks, smiling.

“Will you explain to the jury what kept sleep from your eyes on that particular night, and drove away all thoughts from your pillow?”

“Certainly. Mr. Roberts and myself remained in the parlour, talking for about an hour after the deceased, Mr. Rentoul, and Mr. Allen had left, when, on rising to ring the bell, he complained of giddiness in the head, accompanied with pain, and expressed a wish to lie down. I immediately

placed him on the sofa, rang for assistance, and finding that after some time he continued to exhibit symptoms of uneasiness, Mrs. Roberts and myself agreed to sit up with him till morning ; which we did, in company with his daughter, and had not lain down when the news of Mr. Loader's murder arrived.

With disappointment legibly written upon his countenance, my counsel sat down.

Mr. Rentoul was next examined.

Then the cabman, who, no longer having the fear of the coroner before his eyes, gave his evidence in a very satisfactory manner.

The cutler and policeman followed, and the case for the prosecution closed.

My leading counsel (not Flareup) then rose, and addressed the jury on my behalf, which he did in a brilliant speech of five hours' duration, and sat down amid a burst of applause, which was with difficulty suppressed by the officers of the court.

It being now eight o'clock, the further hearing of the case was adjourned to the following morning.

Another night of sorrow—another morning of gloom, and again I stand in the felon's dock.

No witnesses were examined, my counsel being anxious not to afford the Crown an opportunity for a reply, the result of which he thought would be disastrous.

The Judge summed up. He was strongly prejudiced by the evidence, and failed to exhibit that strict impartiality so essential to the ends of justice. The umbrella and cheque seemed to him conclusive proofs of my guilt. He did not say this in so many words, but he plainly implied it. He gave me the benefit, it is true, of any good character I might previously have had, and wished the jury to do so too, but he warned them against being led away by such characters. Many a man ended his days upon the scaffold, who, up to the commission of the crime which brought him there, lived apparently a pure and spotless life. He said the world abounded in such instances; every age and every clime has had them. Previous character, however good, must therefore be taken with extreme caution. We cannot read the heart.

of man, but we judge him by his deeds. "If (he concluded) after considering carefully and impartially all the facts of this case, the evidence produced, the circumstances under which the accused was found, you are of opinion that he is innocent of the charge, you are bound, of course, to say so. If there be a lingering doubt on your minds—a something that you cannot reconcile with the guilt of the prisoner—then in the name of Him who is mercy itself, give him the benefit of it, and bid him go free. But if, on the other hand, you are fully and firmly convinced of the truth of the evidence, and that you cannot reconcile that evidence with the prisoner's innocence, then, however painful to your feelings, however repugnant to your nature, you must discharge the duty you owe to your God, to your country, and to yourselves, and pronounce him guilty of the crime of murder."

The Judge's charge was unfavourable. Everybody in court felt that.

Slowly, silently, and solemnly, the jury retired, and, after the lapse of an hour, as slowly, silently,

and solemnly did they return. The foreman's step was as noiseless as a cat's, and his face as white as marble itself.

The "issue paper" was handed down, and all eyes were fixed upon the Judge.

No need to look, no need to listen; that ghost-like old man had sealed my doom; and now, with the emblem of death upon his head, his ashy lips consign me to the scaffold.

CHAPTER IX.

**SOMETHING ABOUT SIMON JACKSON AND HIS CON-
FESSION.**

ALONE with God and my innocence, and it is wonderful how calm, self-possessed, and even resigned I have become—resigned to what? To bear for a few days a life of obloquy, and then die a shameful, ignominious, violent, and bloody death. To leave behind me a blackened memory, which the babe, who now nestles^{at} at his mother's breast, will shudder to contemplate, as he grows up to manhood. To be associated in men's minds with the Burkes, the Greenacres, the Corders, the Scanlans, and the Frazers; and to mingle my dust with the very scum and refuse of the earth. To all, and more than all this, I am resigned.

I was aware that even at the eleventh hour

powerful efforts would be made to save me, but I felt that nothing short of the confession of the real murderer could effect this. And who was he, and where was he to be found?

Under certain restrictions I was permitted to see Stephen, and such other friends as were able to procure the necessary order from the proper quarter. To a dying man the Government was as considerate as possible, and allowed interviews to take place of a length not quite in keeping with the prison rules. Perhaps the framers of those rules never expected that they would be very rigidly enforced, but left the good man to act rather according to the spirit than the letter of the law. Be that as it may, true it is that scarcely a day passed without two or three visitors, and that one of these was always O'Leary. During these visits he told me that every effort was being made to save me, and that the Secretary of State had been memorialised with a fair prospect of success—the gloomy side of the question being the judge declining to back the jury's recommendation to mercy.

And days passed, and petitions from those who believed me innocent, and from those who were doubtful, and from others who had a conscientious objection to capital punishment under any circumstance, were presented, and we waited and waited till the heart grew sick, but no reply came. Then Stephen grew pale and anxious—for, poor man, he knew but little “red-tapeism”—and could hardly be prevented from waiting upon the Secretary in person, and endeavouring, from his own lips, to learn the worst.

At length the answer came. It was brief, cold, and unfeeling, as such answers usually are :

“The Secretary of State has carefully read and considered the memorials and petitions presented to him praying for a commutation of the sentence of death passed upon George Allen, for the murder of Edward Loader, on the night of Tuesday the 11th ultime, and regrets that, under all the circumstances of the case, he can see nothing to justify his recommending her Majesty’s interference, and that the law, therefore, must take its course.”

And so the last hope went ; nothing now but to prepare for death !

Mr. Roberts had not visited me since my con-

viction, nor, indeed, any one connected with him, Mr. Snaggs excepted, of whom I began to think better than I had ever done in my life before. Mr. Rogers, it appears, was ill, so ill that his life was almost despaired of; but he sent me the assurance of the full conviction of my innocence, accompanied by an earnest prayer that if we should not meet again on earth, we might meet in another and a better world.

I asked Mr. Snaggs if he brought any message from Mr. Roberts, but he said, "None."

In answer to another question, he informed me that Miss Roberts was unwell, and that it was her intention to go abroad immediately after her marriage.

With the grave itself yawning before me, how I trembled at those words!

I also learned from him that all the "old hands" were still at Cannon-street, with the exception of Jackson, who had lately contracted drunken habits, and was now living a very dissipated life, somewhere in the neighbourhood of the "Seven Dials."

"He hasn't been himself, George, since your trial," said the old man, "nor do I think that he is ever likely to be so again. He couldn't get you or your fate out of his head, except by drinking; and he's now, I fear, a lost man. Poor fellow, with all his eccentricities he had a kind heart."

"I am sorry to hear this," I replied. "Jackson was one of my oldest acquaintances at Mr. Roberts's, and to think that after so many years of uniform good conduct he should turn out as he has, really distresses me. Can nothing be done for him?"

"Nothing! He is now a confirmed drunkard. When I last saw him he seemed a half idiot."

"This is truly lamentable. I have not long to live,—only a week,—yet I would gladly give half of it to cure him of that abominable vice. Would he listen to a dying man, Mr. Snaggs?"

"He wouldn't listen to an angel from heaven," said Snaggs, bluntly.

"I should like much to see him."

"More fool you!" snarled the cynic, and then,

suddenly turning and remembering my position, added, "It would be only time thrown away; but if you really wish to see him, I think it might be managed."

"How?"

"Oh, the governor is an old friend of mine, and will readily admit him."

But can he be found;"

"Leave that to me. I know his lodging well, and, but for you, I almost wish to God I did not. He is a miserable wretch, and at present only a fit companion for the devil and his angels!"

The next day Jackson presented himself, and never did I see so awful a change in any human being. He looked positively old, and premature wrinkles had settled themselves upon his forehead. His eyes were sunken and inflamed, his face pale, bloated, and leprous-looking, whilst, young as he was, streaks of grey might be seen mingling with his red, matted hair.

I talked to him of the sin and folly of drunkenness, and implored of him to be warned ere it was too late, but he would not hear me.

He talked incoherently of me and of my fate, and said that when I was gone he would be happier and better, but that so long as I remained there was nothing for him save to drink.

“ You will kill yourself,” I remarked.

“ That’s exactly what I want to do,” was his reply. “ I don’t wish to live. Why should I? Kill myself! I am killing myself: ending all my troubles, and their name is ‘legion.’ What’s the use of living, I should like to know? A man may live twenty years honestly, and get hanged in the end. Hanged! Ugh! the word sounds horribly. Tell me, now, does the devil ever whisper anything in your ears, such as, ‘blow your brains out’—‘throw yourself into the river’—‘stab yourself with a dagger,’ or anything of that kind?”

“ No,” said I, scarcely able to repress a smile, “for it would be useless. There are no pistols, rivers, or daggers here, Jackson.”

“ Ah! why not get the one that killed Loader. It’s somewhere, I suppose, isn’t it?”

“ Jackson, you have been drinking this very day, and you are now in a state of frenzy.”

"Of course I've been drinking," he replied, "and shall continue to do so to the end of my days."

"A bad habit, Jackson."

"Yes, but if a man has awful dreams at night, what is he to do but drink, I should like to know? I'm always thinking and dreaming of old Loader, and I often see him standing by my bedside all bloody, and shaking his head, and——"

"You are mad, Jackson; drink has disordered your brain."

"No, no; drink hasn't done it; something else has, though, but you musn't know it."

"Don't tell me anything you wish to conceal," said I, quietly.

"Ah, that I won't!" he exclaimed, with what was meant for a cunning leer; "for then they'd hang me as well as you! Two men on the same scaffold! ha, ha, ha!"

"What a poor, jabbering idiot he has become!" I thought, as I gazed in real sorrow upon the wretched man.

"Tell me," he continued, coming closer to me, laying his hand upon my arm and peering into my face—"tell me, do you ever dream of Loader?"

"Never!"

"Nor ever see him by your bed-side thus?" He raised his arm as he spoke, and pointed steadily towards the wall with the index finger of his right hand.

"Never!"

"Do you never, then, throw the bedclothes off in the middle of the night, and roll yourself on to the floor, shrieking for mercy!"

"Never! Jackson, you are a half lunatic already, and, mark my words, the last words in all probability I shall ever address to you, if you do not give up your drunken, dissipated habits, you will soon find yourself in a madhouse."

"I wish I was in one this minute," he said, with an earnestness that surprised me, "for I know I shall be when you are gone. Ugh! I dread to think of it! I love you, George, better than you think, and I am trying to kill myself for

your sake. We were boys together, you know, and we slept for two years in the same bed. Wouldn't it be funny if we lay in the same grave ? but that can't be, for they'll bury you somewhere, under-ground, after they've hung you, without hearses, or plumes, or morning coaches, with a bushel of quicklime on the top of you by way of a counterpane, and you'll melt away in no time ; but I shall be decently entered in a churchyard, or a public cemetery, I'm not sure which, with the funeral service read for me, and a lot of people coming from all parts to cry, and, if they like, get drunk over me. So that's a difference. And there will be another difference, too ; for the moment the last breath leaves your body, an angel, either Gabriel or Michael, will carry you away and lay you in Abraham's bosom, as they did the ragged fellow long ago, and you'll be all right. But the devil, or one of his imps, will seize me, and drag me down, down, down, ever so far into the blackness and smoke of the 'bottomless pit,' and there I shall burn for ever and ever and ever."

“For God’s sake, Jackson,” I exclaimed, horrified less at the wretch’s words than his manner, “for God’s sake go home, live soberly, give up bad company, place some praiseworthy object steadily before you, seek to attain it, and all will be well.”

“Well, you did all that, and yet you are going to be hanged; but notwithstanding, you’ll die happier than I shall, and that ought to be a comfort to you. Yes, I think I’ll go home, as you advise me; for I don’t like staying here much longer—this cell is so cold, and dark, and dismal, and I think old Ned Loader is grinning at me from out that corner yonder.”

I rose, for I saw that he felt uncertain whether to go or stay. “Good-bye, Jackson!” said I, holding-out my hand; Good-bye, and may God bless you! It is the last prayer you shall hear from my lips.”

He did not touch my hand, so I approached more closely to him.

“Oh no, no, no!” he exclaimed, shrinking

back, "not that—do not touch me—do not come near me—do not look at me! I cannot—dare not take your hand?"

"Believe me, Jackson, it is not stained with any man's blood."

"And who said it was—did I? And yet if you didn't murder Loader, why are you going to be hanged in a week—eh?"

"Circumstances are against me," I replied, "and the jury could come to no other conclusion perhaps, than that I was guilty. But I did not murder him, Jackson, and there's One above who knows it."

"Does He know everything? Aye, so He does—I had forgotten that. And then, of course, He knows who murdered Loader."

"He does; and, believe me, He will one day bring everything to light."

"Do you think so?" he asked earnestly; "do you really think He will make it known who killed him?"

"I do solemnly and sincerely declare it."

“Then it’s very likely that He will show up the right man in time to save you from being hanged— isn’t it?”

“I don’t know that. God’s ways are not our ways, Jackson.”

“For all that, I don’t think you’ll be hanged—at least I hope not. And now I’ll go, for here’s the man come to show me out. Good-bye, and God bless you! Never mind shaking’ hands, I don’t like it. But keep up your courage, and if you escape the hanging, as I’m sure you will, think sometimes of poor crazed, wrong-headed, broken-hearted Simon Jackson.”

The officer motioned to him that the time was up, and he left the cell without uttering another word.

It was now four o’clock, and the last visitor for the evening was announced. It was Stephen Dorricks.

I started on seeing him, but he held out his hand with the old quiet smile, and took a seat beside me.

"This is kind of you!" said I, returning his pressure.

"I should have called days ago," he replied, "but that I feared you might consider my visit an intrusion."

"An intrusion! How could you think so? I assure you I was most anxious to see you."

"Indeed!" and Dorricks looked surprised.

"Yes, if it were only to assure you how deeply I regretted the cross-examination to which you were subjected by my counsel, at the trial."

"My dear Mr. Allen," said Dorricks, laying his hand impressively on my arm, "the gentleman only discharged a solemn duty he owed to you and to himself. Had he acted otherwise, he would have been unworthy the confidence reposed in him."

"Perhaps so; but then it looked so like an attempt to fasten suspicion upon you, that I felt grieved by the question, though, as you are aware, I had no power to prevent it."

"It was the most effectual way to remove suspicion, had such existed," replied Dorricks.

“Mr. Dorricks, I will ask you one question. Do you believe me guilty of this crime?”

“Honestly and truly, I do not.”

“Does Mr. Roberts?”

“No, nor any member of his family, or the family of the murdered man.”

“Well, that is consoling.”

“Yes, it should be so; but I have still great hopes that your life will be spared. You are, of course, aware of the efforts that even now are being made in your behalf?”

I answered in the affirmative.

“It cannot be but that they will be attended with success. Should they fail, your friends (among whom I beg of you to include my unworthy self) have it still in their power to prostrate themselves at the foot of the throne, and implore of our young Queen to exercise her royal prerogative. Such a course is not without precedent.”

“It has seldom proved successful, Mr. Dorricks.”

“I am not sure of that. Women do not like to shed blood; and our royal lady has a true women’s heart. But I bring you news you will be sorry to hear. Mr. Roberts has had an attack of apoplexy, and now lies seriously ill at Tudor Lodge. Your misfortunes have greatly affected him, and his medical advisers sometimes almost fear for his life.”

Mr. Roberts seriously ill? I was pained beyond expression. Changed as he was latterly, he had always been a true friend; and the thought that my trials had, to a great extent, aggravated that illness, caused me a bitter pang.

“I am sorry to hear it,” was the only reply I could give to Dorricks. My heart was too full for words, and it found vent only in a burst of passionate tears.

Dorricks, affected almost to tears himself, drew me towards him as if I were a love-sick girl, leant my head upon his shoulder, wiped away the scalding tears from my eyes, and poured the “oil and wine” of consolation into my wounded soul.

We then talked upon indifferent subjects, and in half-an-hour he left me.

If the truth were known, I felt deeply mortified at receiving no message of any kind from Eveleen. Our interview before the trial (the particulars of which I did not think it necessary to give) partook of much that was painful, yet it left me with an indefinable feeling of happiness that the terrors of death could not wholly destroy ; but now that that death was so closely at hand, and all hope of escape long since fled, I looked with longing for the hour when, like a ministering angel, her presence might once more light up my lonely cell. I looked in vain, for she came not ; and now I remembered in all their force the words of Snaggs, " Miss Roberts is not well."

The day which followed that of Dorrick's visit, and the one preceding that fixed for my execution, was fast wearing away, and I lay moodily upon my mattress in a far corner of the cell. No one, not even Stephen, had called, though now nearly five o'clock, and I felt unusually dispirited and de-

pressed. It was the first day he had been absent from the date of my committal—a period of many weeks—and I felt perplexed beyond measure to trace that absence to any reasonable or probable cause. Had he been ill, I should have heard of it through some channel or another; and the only conclusion I could at length arrive at was that he had been making a last effort in my behalf, and failed, and now, wearied and worn out, had sunk into a listlessness bordering upon apathy.

I tried to compose myself to sleep, but in vain; to read (for tracts and religious books innumerable strewed the cell) — vainer still. My brain throbbed with thinking, and my eyes grew pained with watching, but still no one came. Darkness overspread me like a thick mantle, and no sound was heard, save the hard, thick breathing of the two turnkeys, who, for the last three or four days and nights, occupied the cell with me. Suddenly they started up, and turning upon me an anxious glance (for they had been betrayed into a little sleep), whispered, “The governor’s coming round.”

And then the key was turned in the lock, the ponderous bolts shot slowly back, a grating of hinges, a quick, bounding step, and Stephen O'Leary, with a cry of joy, had taken me in his arms. The poor fellow laughed and sobbed, and embraced me by turns, and in so frantic a manner that I thought he had given himself up to drinking, and, like Jackson, had lost his senses.

Receiving nothing in reply to my oft-repeated questions but a bear-like hug—far too vigorous to be agreeable—I turned in sheer despair to the governor.

That gentleman smiled, and his smile was full of hope.

“What is it?” I asked,

He smiled again.

“Have you news?”

“Yes, and good news. The real murderer has been found.”

“Great God, I thank thee!” I exclaimed, from the bottom of my heart.

“You have good reason,” replied the governor; “for you’ve had a narrow escape of it.”

“ And the murderer—who is he ? ”

“ Who was he, rather ? for he is now dead.”

“ Dead ! ”

Quick as lightning, a thought flashed across my brain.

“ It is not—it cannot be Jackson ? ” I gasped.

“ The very man. But having said so much, I really think I ought to let Mr. O’Leary tell the rest. Come, men, you may now leave Mr. Allen, and that, too, without any fear of his committing suicide. Recollect, Mr. O’Leary,” he added, turning to Stephen, “ I give you twenty minutes, not more. We lock up at six, sharp ! ”

And the governor and his men then went out.

Stephen appeared to see the necessity for making the most of the time allotted to him ; for, the moment we were alone, he proceeded, without the slightest circumlocution, and at a very rapid pace, to tell me how, the evening before, Jackson, on leaving me, turned into a public-house, and drank to such an excess that he became speedily intoxicated, and was directed by the landlord to quit the

premises. This he refused to do, and force was employed to remove him. He resisted determinedly, striking right and left at the bystanders, swearing awfully, and challenging any given number of them to fight. One man, to his shame, accepted the challenge, and the poor fellow, blindly staggering towards him, received a terrible fall, and the back part of his head coming in violent contact with the kerb-stone, he lay, to all appearance, dead for several minutes. Stephen, passing at the moment, and recognising him, he was taken, by his advice to Guy's Hospital, where it was fully two hours before consciousness returned. The doctor pronounced the injuries to be of a most fatal character—concussion of the brain, and a breakage of the left thigh, rendering recovery altogether hopeless.

“I was by his bedside,” continued O’Leary, “when the probable result was made known to him, and I never, in all my life, witnessed so horrible a scene. He sat up in the bed, notwithstanding the injuries he had received, and

with starting bloodshot eyes and foaming lips, yelled screamed, blasphemed, tore his hair, cursed God himself, and those around him. He had to be held forcibly down, and, when no longer able to struggle or curse, glared at the doctors, whom he called devils sent to torture him, and gnashed his teeth, and shook his fists in their faces, in impotent rage.

“ ‘That man’s hell has already begun,’ said one of the attendants, as he hurried from the room.

“And so it was, for he howled as if its fires were already consuming him.

“After an hour or so, he became more calm, and at length fell into a quiet, unbroken slumber. I decided upon not leaving his bedside, for something whispered to me that all was not right with him. There was no objection made to this, so I sat quietly down at some distance from the bed and, pulling out a newspaper, pretended to read, but in reality had my eyes and ears directed towards the sleeping man, and watching with eager-

ness for the first words that should issue from his lips.

“It was six o'clock when we brought him to the hospital, and it wanted but a quarter to ten when, with a heavy groan, he awoke. He motioned for a drink, which was brought to him, and, having drank it, he seemed to revive a little, and inquired the hour.

“‘Aye,’ said he, rather wildly, and fixing his eyes upon the nurse, ‘ten o'clock. What day is this?’

“Sunday, he was told.

“‘Sunday! and George Allen will be hanged in a few hours, as sure as I'm a drunken man. Sunday! God, I didn't think 'twas so near. Poor fellow, I liked him! He saved me from a thrashing once, and if I thought I wouldn't recover I'd tell all, and save him from a halter.’

“I grasped the arm of the doctor, whose name is Tyne, and held it tightly — ‘Listen! I whispered—’ there's life and death in his words.’

“ ‘Oh, nonsense,’ said he, endeavouring to free himself; ‘the fellow is delirious, and merely raves. Drink, and the nature of his injuries, will make him fancy, and say a thousand things—I shouldn’t be at all surprised if he charged himself presently with the murder of that unfortunate man, Loader.’

“Tyne and I had spoken in a low, subdued tone, yet, so acute was the wretch’s hearing, that though eight or ten yards from us, the moment the word ‘Loader’ was pronounced, he raised himself sharply on his elbow, and, looking towards where we sat, demanded what we meant by mentioning Mr. Loader’s name in his presence.

“ ‘We were merely talking of his murder,’ said the doctor, quietly.

“ ‘Ah, wasn’t it awful?’ he replied shuddering, and half-covering his head with the bedclothes. ‘Awful!—it makes me shiver to think of it! Think of it! I shall think of nothing else whilst I live, except, perhaps, the hanging of poor George

Allen—and that'll be a murder, too, only it'll be done with more ceremony.'

" 'Why would it be a murder to hang George Allen?' I asked, disregarding a warning gesture from Tyne.

" 'What's that to you?' he exclaimed, sharply. 'I'm not a Roman Catholic, nor are you a priest, that I should confess to you. My secret is my own.'

" 'If you know anything that could be urged in his favour,' I continued, 'you are cruel to withhold it. He is now on the brink of eternity, and a word from you might save him. Think what an opportunity is afforded you of doing good, even at the eleventh hour; of restoring that young man to his home and friends, and——'

" 'The arms of Eveleen Roberts. Ha— ha—ha! We all three loved her—he, Dorricks, and the half-witted, uncouth Simon Jackson. I was brought up with her—played with her, bought her toys and gingerbread, when we were children, and when I

grew up to be a man, ugly and despised as I was, I fell in love with her. Now, was'nt it funny ?

“ ‘ If you love Miss Roberts so much, then why not do what I am sure she would wish you—save an innocent man from death ?’

“ ‘ How do you know he is innocent ? he asked, again starting up.

“ ‘ I always knew it,’ I replied ; ‘ and you yourself just now implied it.’

“ ‘ No, I didn’t ! You jump at conclusions very quickly, whoever you are. I didn’t imply, I tell you again, but I asserted it, and I’ll do so over and over and over, without caring who hears me—George Allen is innocent !’

“ ‘ Who, then, is guilty ?’

“ He shook his head mysteriously for some time.

“ I repeated the question.

“ ‘ Ah,’ he replied, ‘ you will not catch me ; I’m deep, deep, deep as the pit into which I shall one day sink.’

“ ‘ That day is nearer than you think,’ said I,

deliberately and emphatically, 'for surely as there's a God in heaven, your hours are numbered.'

"With a loud, long, despairing cry, the wretched man sank back upon his pillow ; and Tyne, pushing me aside with an angry exclamation on his lips, moved hastily to the bed, and bent over him.

"But he was neither insensible nor exhausted. He was simply horror-stricken.

"He lay for some moments without motion, and then, slowly raising his head, he whispered in the doctor's ear—

" 'Is this true?'

" 'It may be if that man remains much longer in the room.—I really must insist upon your withdrawing,' he said, turning and addressing himself to me. 'Your presence disturbs my patient, and quietness is everything to him at present.'

"He then approached me unobserved by Jackson, and tearing a leaf from his pocket-book,

wrote something on it in pencil, and slipped it into my hand.

“The writing was as follows—

“‘This man is not raving, as I at first supposed. Go behind that curtain, in order that he may talk with greater freedom, but don’t lose a word of what passes. Meantime I’ll send for a magistrate, in case he should wish to make a dying deposition, as he hasn’t many hours to live.’

“I got behind the curtain, which was used for dividing certain portions of the ward, and the doctor drew another near Jackson’s bedside, completely cutting off all communication with the other patients, and enclosing the two, as if in a private room.

“Having sent for a magistrate and a policeman, my friend returned, and again sat down.

“There was a rent in the curtain, and by applying my eye and ear alternately to it, I could distinctly see and hear what was going on. But this was not enough. My anxiety not to lose a syllable was so great that I

added considerably to this rent, and could at any moment have popped my head through it, had I so desired.

“When Jackson looked up he was evidently surprised at the change. Only one man where there were two, one patient where there were six, and one bed where there had been a score. This set him thinking.

“ ‘I thought I had been in a hospital, and that you were a doctor,’ he said, after some moments’ reflection.

“ ‘Indeed! Why did you think that?’ asked Tyne.

“ ‘Oh, I don’t know; I believe I thought I had a fall and broke my leg, and that some one brought me to an hospital, and that you were doctering me like ‘one o’clock.’ But,—peering into Tyne’s face—‘this ain’t an hospital, is it?’

“ ‘Does it look like one?’

“ ‘No, not a bit. What’s your name?’

“ ‘Tyne.’

“ ‘ Ah ! Tyne ; not a bad name, either. Mine’s Jackson—Simon Jackson, son of Peter Jackson, porter, formerly of Cannon-street, deceased. Yes, Tyne, a son of that illustrious individual ; so here’s his health, and yours too. Your a Scotchman, I dare say ? ’

“ ‘ An Englishman, like yourself, Mr. Jackson.’

“ ‘ I’m glad of it ; here’s your health, again, ‘ a fine old English gentleman all of the ’—something or another. Gad, its awful dull work, lying here cramped up in this manner ; so, with your permission, Tyne, I’ll get up and have a short smoke.’

“ Before the doctor could interfere, he had thrust the bedclothes off, and, literally dragging the crushed and broken limb after the uninjured one, he succeeded in reaching the floor,

“ ‘ Help here, for God’s sake ! ’ shouted Tyne, rushing towards him, and endeavouring to hold him down ; but he dashed him aside as if he had been an infant, and would probably have gained

the door, had not half-a-dozen residents and attendants burst in, and, overpowering him, lifted him by main force back into the bed.

"The pain from his maimed member soon recalled him to reason.

" 'Oh, I forgot,' he muttered, 'that my thigh was broken. If ever I get well, I'll prosecute that fellow who had me flung into the streets. If it hadn't been for him I shouldn't be here to-night.'

" 'You remember all about it, then?' said Tyne, motioning the others to withdraw a little.

" 'To be sure I do. I had just been to see George Allen, who is to be hanged on Tuesday for a murder he never committed, and just went into—'

" 'Why was he found guilty, then, if he didn't commit it?'

" 'Because he happened to be out that night with Loader, and circumstances were against him.'

" 'Oh, I see! But somebody committed it, I suppose?'

Jackson nodded.

“ ‘ And you could give a close guess at that somebody, I dare say ?’

“ ‘ I believe you ! Come, will you deal plainly with me, if I deal plainly with you ?’

“ ‘ I will—I promise.’

“ ‘ Is this hurt fatal ?’

“ ‘ It is !’

“ ‘ How long have I to live ?’

“ ‘ About two hours.’

“ ‘ Not more ?’

“ ‘ Not more.’

“ ‘ You speak truly ?’

“ ‘ As I hope for mercy at the last great day.’

“ ‘ Well, then, bend down your ear—closer yet—closer,—’*twas I, Simon Jackson, son of Peter Jackson aforesaid, who murdered old Nea Loader !*’

“ ‘ Great God !’ exclaimed Tyne ; can this be true ?’

“ ‘ It can—it is,’ said the dying man. ‘ I murdered him.’

“ ‘But why? What had he done to you?’ ”

“ ‘Nothing; but I was a gambler and a robber, and all that sort of thing; and Loader detected me with some marked money which I had taken from his desk, and a lot of other things besides, and though he promised never to tell Roberts, I feared he would; and that was one of the reasons why I did for him.’ ”

“ ‘It wasn’t the only reason, then?’ ”

“ ‘I’ll not tell you any more—you’re too inquisitive. Haven’t I said enough to spare George Allen if I die; and if I live I can deny it all, and then they may hang him as high as Haman if they please. I like George well, but I like myself a great deal better—that’s human nature, I think. If you should ever see him, tell him what became of that lock of hair. Ha—ha—ha!’ ”

“ ‘And what became of it?’ ”

“ ‘I got it! he shouted with energy, ‘employed a man to take it out from his pocket when he lay stunned in Bow-street. I got it, and would have kept it, and had it buried with me whenever my

time came, and wouldn't have given it back to him had he paid me with his blood—a drop for every hair!’

“ ‘Where is it now?’

“ ‘It was forced from me, and burnt before my eyes. God!’ he roared, while his eyes flashed up with a hellish light—‘God! if I had those by the throat who did it, I’d strangle them on the spot, though that were the last effort I made in this life!’

“ ‘You wouldn’t tell me the names of those parties, I suppose!’

“ ‘No? It’s a secret. I’ll carry it with me to the grave.’

“ ‘How did you murder Loader?’

“ ‘I reached across his shoulder and stabbed him to the heart.’

“ ‘There were three wounds, though?’

“ ‘I gave him the other two, after he had fallen down.’

“ ‘Did you rob him?’

“ ‘He had nothing to take, except a few

shillings, and those I left with him. They'll do to say masses for his soul if he's a catholic,' said the wretch, with frightful levity. 'All I took from him was his pocket-book.'

" 'What became of it?'

" 'I buried it and the dagger, which I saw was broken, in the Green-yard of Old St. Pancras. Don't ask me any more questions.'

" 'Have you any objection to declare all this to a magistrate?'

" 'He eyed the doctor suspiciously for some time.

" 'You're not playing 'fast and loose' with me?' he asked.

" 'What do you mean?'

" 'You havn't been getting this out of me for the purpose of giving me up.'

" 'No, as I'm a living man. All I want is to save the innocent. You, the guilty, will not survive this night.'

" 'Well, then, if that's the case, get a magistrate as soon as you like. If I can't live myself I'll let another do so, and perhaps that'll help me

over the river. You must be quick, though, for I feel I'm going.'

"The magistrate and a policeman now entered (a policeman really had been found), and Jackson's deposition or confession was taken down as accurately as possible. He asked to have it read over for him, and on that being done, wrote underneath—

" 'This statement is correct, and I make it of my own free will and accord.

" (Signed), SIMON JACKSON.

" 'Guy's Hospital, 28th June.'

" 'That's all right,' said he, looking up, after attempting to sign his name with a flourish; that's the ticket, I believe?'

" 'All right! quite right!' said the magistrate, carefully folding up the document.

" 'I'm glad of it! It's the first good deed I ever did in my life, and it's sure to be the last. I should like some one to tell Eveleen Roberts how much I loved her, and how often I prayed for her;

and that my dying words were not to marry Dorricks if she can help it, but to take George Allen, who is a better and a truer man. Ah, if it wern't for something, I could tell her about this same Dorricks that—but no matter; my lips are now sealed—sealed as closely as poor Loader's in his bloody shroud. I thought I should see him when dying, as I have whilst living, and that he would be at my bed, and grinning at me, and—but its all humbug. I'm dying now, and he's not here. I killed him, and yet he doesn't come to tell me of the tortures they are preparing for me, down—down there! I suppose he doesn't know much about that, though, for what business would he have in hell? Hell!—ha, ha, ha! there's fire and brimstone there, and 'twas made specially for me and Stephen Dorricks, I think, in order that we might burn together throughout all eternity!

“His head dropped heavily on the pillow, with a dull, hollow sound; and Tyne, rising with a sigh of relief, passed a candle across his half-staring eyes, and simply muttered, ‘*He is dead!*’”

CHAPTER X.

I AM FREE! THE AVENGER ON THE TRACK.

A FEW days from the date of the events recorded in our last chapter, and the key again grated in the lock, the massive iron door swung back upon its hinges, and I walked forth into the light and air of heaven *a free man*. Free! wholly and entirely free. Free! ah, who can understand that word in its fulness and entirety, save those who have languished, like myself, in a rayless dungeon, and felt that the only path from it led them to the scaffold? Free to walk God's earth with the knowledge that my innocence had been made clear to all, and that the really guilty had confessed to the crime for which I had well-nigh suffered. My triumph was full, my vindication complete, and I

could now mingle with my fellow-men, and take up my proper position in the world, unspotted and unstained. I could claim that world's sympathy ; and when has it been denied to suffering innocence ?

Jackson's confession (poor, misguided, erring Jackson !) was a voluntary one, given under no peculiar excitement, and certainly without coercion of any kind whatever. It was a plain, unvarnished statement of facts relating to the murder of poor Loader, though the motives which led to it were still to a considerable extent shrouded in mystery and darkness. It is true there were some passing allusion to Dorricks, but it was so slight and unsupported, that no sane man could for a moment attach any importance to it. It was plain that Jackson disliked him, and with this dislike, and the full conviction that the hand of death was upon him, and that no after consequences were to be dreaded so far as he, a dying man, was concerned, it was not too much to expect that had he (Dorricks) been even in the remotest degree

connected with the murder he would with his last breath have openly denounced him. To have made the confession full and entire (and such he evidently wished it to be), this, and this alone, seemed wanting. But did he do so? No! There was a vague charge, no doubt, so vague that it might readily have been made against any man; and if it was worth anything, which seemed extremely improbable, it might possibly have referred to some incident in the life of Dorricks in no way connected with Loader, Jackson, or myself.

It occurred to many that the wretched young man had written a full confession, which would be found after his death, implicating others as actors in the bloody drama; but though diligent search was made, and money and time expended, no such confession was ever found. The pocket-book and dagger were discovered, and in the former was found a memorandum, dated the day of the murder, to the effect that Loader had drawn a cheque for £100, which he intended presenting to me, precisely in the place indicated, but nothing further.

And so time rolled on, and the smooth waters settled themselves above the head of Simon Jackson, and he and his crime became things of the past.

Almost the first use I made of my liberty, was to call upon the poor girls who had perhaps suffered most of all by the sudden stroke.

I found them as I had expected—"Sorrowing, but not as those without hope." Time, too, had partly healed the wound, and dried up the well-spring of grief. Readiest among the ready, with warm, gushing, practical sympathy, was Richard Graham. I felt that it would be so, for I knew his heart, and, knowing, trusted it.

To my surprise, little Fanny did not appear to have suffered so much as I had feared, and she looked far less delicate, and far more cheerful than when I saw her last. But when I considered that Graham was her gentle, loving nurse, I own I no longer wondered. Graham told me, as the reader is already aware, that he loved her. "And if there be truth in woman," thought I, "that love is returned."

I next called upon Mr. Roberts, and he received me kindly, but by no means warmly. He expressed his satisfaction at seeing me, but thought that, for various reasons, I should not return to my former employment, at least, not for the present. I told him it was not my intention to do so, and then inquired after the health of Mrs. and Miss Roberts. He said they were both well, but out of London, and would not be back for a week or so before the marriage, which had been postponed in consequence of the death of Loader.

“Did he know those words stabbed me? If so, it was cruelty itself.”

And Dorricks, the ever-gentle, sympathising Dorricks—where was he? Gone to O’Leary’s to take me by the hand, and express the deep, deep thankfulness with which he regarded my release. So Mr. Roberts said, and so, on my return, I found it.

Never shall I forget the expression of joy that lighted up his pale, handsome countenance, as he took me by the hand and said:—“Mr. Allen, this

is a moment I have long prayed for ! The morning of your life has been clouded—may its evening be calm and tranquil.”

In the midst of all the congratulations so freely showered upon me, I had still time to think of Marston, and again were my steps bent towards Mr. Hopkins's, of the “Shoreditch.” To my surprise and disappointment, that gentleman had not seen him since my last visit, nor could he give me any clue by which I might discover his whereabouts. He handed me back my own letter, and expressed his full intention of standing something to drink. Saddened and depressed, I wended my way slowly homeward, and met Stephen a short distance from the house in quest of me.

A letter, he said, bearing the New York post-mark, was lying at home for me. One of Mr. Roberts's porters had left it in the early part of the day, it having been addressed to Cannon-street.

“We must leave for Galway to-morrow, George,” he continued, as we mounted the steps

leading to the hall door; "a month there will do you all the good in the world."

How tenderly he alluded to the real cause of the trip! A month, and she would be the wife of Dorricks.

The letter, addressed "G. Allen, Esq.," was in the handwriting of my step-father, Philip Marston.

Stephen and I (for I had no secrets from him) ran our eyes over it together, and read thus:—

"New York, 14th June.

"DEAR GEORGE,—I am here and busy, though not with my own affairs. I have heard that Eveleen Roberts marries Stephen Dorricks on the 16th proximo, in St. George's Church. *I know him, and will be there.*

"Ever yours,

"P. M."

These few lines altered all our plans. We would not go to Galway.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MARRIAGE—AN INTERRUPTION—AND A
DEATH.

A FORTNIGHT passed but I could hear nothing of Eveleen. She had not yet returned. A week more and Dorricks called to give me an invitation to be present at the marriage ceremony and the wedding breakfast; and he took occasion to allude to Mr. Roberts's conduct towards me, which he pronounced quite inexcusable. When, however, he possessed the right to remonstrate with him he would do so. The right! How he cut me! It was unwittingly, though, for it was perfectly evident that he never even dreamed of my attachment to Eveleen.

I had sufficient mastery over my feelings, therefore, to beg that he would not mention the

subject to Mr. Roberts ; and then, on the part of Stephen, Mrs. O'Leary, and myself, formally accepted the invitation.

I told Stephen of the invitation, and he was glad that I had accepted it. He still adhered to the opinion that Eveleen would never marry Dorricks.

And ten days passed, and but four now remained ; the eleventh brought me a letter from Eveleen. It was short and evidently written with a struggle. I give it :

“Boulogne sur Mer.

“Thanks to our gracious God for your deliverance ; it was strange and unlooked-for. On Wednesday next I marry Dorricks. He is kind, and tried hard to save you. Be present at the ceremony, and see how determinedly I will go through it. Quit England then, and never let me see you more. I told mamma I would write to you, and she approved of it. I now think better of Stephen than I ever did before, and am very sorry for having wronged him. I will try and be a good wife to him, for I am sure he deserves it. Till Wednesday, adieu, and then for ever.
E. R.”

A last look, dear Eveleen, a last prayer, and all will be over !

Over ! Have I nothing to live for, then ? Yes ! two hearts that must now be all the world to me ; they are worth living for, and for them, God aiding me, I will live.

And days again passed, and that one came which was to smile upon the vows (oh, vows how often broken !) of the gentle Eveleen and the saint-like Dorricks.

It was a bright, warm morning, yet I felt a chill as I emerged from the bedclothes, and proceeded to dress for the ceremony. In an hour, and we three were in a hired carriage, and rattling over the hard London pavement towards St. George's Church, of which the Rev. Walter Somers was the incumbent.

We soon reached it, and found all the parties assembled, save the officiating clergyman, who I understood was the Rev. Lennox Mowbray, nephew to a "peer," and heir to fourteen thousand a-year. When he arrived, I found him a man of

about fifty, tall, slow, and pompous, with a cold, grey, fishy eye; a long head, and small white, delicate-looking hands. Notwithstanding being a little late, he was by no means in a hurry; but walked with a measured, stately step into the vestry-room, where he remained for at least a quarter of an hour robing, discoursing with the clerk, and brushing his scant iron-grey locks over his ears and into his eyes. He then took up his proper position at the communion-table, and called to the sexton to shut down the window, the draught being—on a hot July morning—as he termed it, “perfectly intolerable.”

Whilst this was being done, Stephen and I, who stood somewhat in the background, glanced simultaneously around the church; but there was no Marston there, and I felt a bitter pang at my heart as I again turned towards the bridal party. It was a small one. Mr. and Mrs. Roberts, the bride elect, two bridesmaids, Dorricks, his “best man,” Graham, Mr. Snaggs, and six or eight others.

Never once during the ceremony did I catch the eye of Eveleen or of Mrs. Roberts; they both seemed carefully and sedulously to avoid me. Mr. Roberts merely inclined his head as we entered, and then turning to his daughter, whispered something in her ear. Not so, Dorricks! He glided to our side for a moment, pressed our hands cordially, and then stepped forward to his original position, and the service almost immediately afterwards began. The Rev. Lennox seemed at first as if he intended "intoning" it; but changing his mind, read with tolerable distinctness and solemnity the usual opening address, as prescribed by the Church of England. This having been gone through, he proceeded to that part commencing with, "I require and charge you both;" and again my eyes wandered round the church, and again wearily and hopelessly did they seek the calm, upturned face of Stephen Dorricks.

No impediment to the marriage having been alleged by any present, the usual question, "Wilt thou have," &c., was put and answered. Their

troth was next plighted; the ring produced, put on, and the reverend gentleman formally pronounced them *man and wife*.

Like a lump of ice, his words fell upon my heart, and I leant heavily against Stephen for support.

"Courage, lad!" he whispered; "the eye of Dorricks is upon you."

It was so. He looked at me half pityingly, half wonderingly.

In a moment I was myself again.

"Let us pray," said the minister; and as we knelt down there was a slight rustle behind me, and some one breathed very hard. I dared not turn to look, but I felt certain that it was a woman.

The prayer proceeded; but when Mr. Mowbray came to the words, "Whereas the ring given and received is a token and pledge," there was a pause, and I saw distinctly a hand rapidly passed over the shoulder of the kneeling Dorricks, on to the open book in the hands of the clergyman, and

as rapidly withdrawn. No eye but my own saw this ; for all were so impressed with the solemnity of the service that they did not look up. The pause became a lengthened one, and then Mowbray rose, and in a clear, ringing voice, and with the book still before him, read thus :—

“ I certify to having performed the marriage ceremony, in St. Saviour’s Church, Liverpool, on Sunday, the 6th day of April, 1838, between Stephen Armytage, otherwise Dorricks, gentleman, and Eleanor Anne, daughter of the late Robert Hutton of this town, coachbuilder.

(Signed)

Ebenezer Williams, Incumbent.

David Stuart

William Langan

} Witnesses.

“ Dated this 1st July, 1845.”

With a cry of surprise and horror we all rose to our feet, and glared wildly at the minister.

“ Have I read aright ?” he asked, turning to Dorricks. “ Can this be true ?”

Dorricks stretched out his hand and took the paper, which he appeared to examine with some curiosity.

"It is true in every particular," said he, with a soft smile as he handed it back.

"Oh, God be thanked!" burst from the agonised heart behind me, and in an instant the wasted form of a once lovely woman was crouching at his feet.

He raised her, and, I thought, tenderly—Heaven be praised for that one touch of nature.

"Oh, Stephen, my own, own wedded love, joy and pride of this poor withered heart! look on me, and say that you own me as your wife."

Dorricks took her on his arm, but not a muscle of his face moved, though Philip Marston now sternly confronted him.

"Do you acknowledge this woman to be your wife?" asked the latter.

"I have already done so," said Dorricks, calmly.

"'Tis well; fear not, your secret is safe with me. Villain, as you are, Dorricks, I would not harm you."

"I thank you. Come with me, madam."

“To the world’s end, Stephen,” exclaimed the poor trembling creature; “for my heart is still yours—yours as truly and devotedly as—”

“I will spare you the remainder,” he interrupted; “for I perceive that our presence here is no longer necessary. I presume no one intends indicting me for an attempt at bigamy?”

All were silent.

“I have to apologise, then, for the intrusion of this lady, who, you see, thinks her husband worth claiming, after all. Mr. Roberts, your daughter is free.—Mr. Allen, marry her.—Mr. O’Leary, don’t get drunk at the wedding.—Marston, a word with you.”

He bowed with his old grace and stateliness; and with his wife upon his arm, and closely followed by Marston, walked quietly out.

Ten minutes elapsed before any one in the sacred edifice had found his tongue.—The Rev. Lennox Mowbray was the first to speak.

“This is an unhappy business,” said he, “but pray make the best of it.”

Such was that gentleman's mode of conveying consolation.

We left the church, and sought our homes in silence. I saw Eveleen and her mother helped into a carriage, but I did not trust myself with a look at their faces.

That night Mr. Roberts was seized with a fit of apoplexy, and expired before medical assistance could reach him. Crushed and humbled at the disgrace and downfall of his favourite, and mortified beyond measure at the failure of his own schemes respecting him and Eveleen, the proud heart of that stern old man had burst, and he died without a sigh or groan.

CHAPTER XII.

DORRICKS' CONFESSION.

MY story draws to a close ; but little now remains to be told.

Mr. Roberts's will was examined. It was brief. To Mrs. Roberts he had left a life-interest in £10,000, invested in the "Consolidated Funds," the principal to revert to Eveleen at her death. To Dorricks (how he loved that man!), provided he became the husband of Eveleen, two-thirds of the profits of his well-paying establishment, the remaining third to go to poor Loader. "A codicil" had been added since the poor gentleman's murder, revoking that part of the will, which concerned him, but leaving £3,000 to be divided equally amongst his daughters.

There was not the slightest allusion to Graham in it, nor, indeed, did he expect it, for he had never been a favourite.

I did not see Marston for about a week after Mr. Roberts's death. He called one night late at Stephen's, where he found us all seated round the fireside.

"Dorricks and his wife," said he, "have left the country; and here is a confession, which I have induced him to make. Do not read it for a month or so; I have not ventured to do so myself, but believe it is full and complete."

"And you?" I asked, taking a small sealed packet from his hand.

"This is my last night in England; to-morrow I sail for another land."

And Marston went. I accompanied him to Liverpool, and there, on board the "Adriatic," shook hands with for the last time.

Mrs. and Miss Roberts now went abroad, and I sank into a gloomy, listless, apathetic young man.

From this apathy I was aroused by the return

to England of my relative, Mr. Spalding. He had acquired considerable wealth, and come back rich as a Jew, and as yellow as a kite's claw. He made a will in my favour (for he had no other connections), and then retired quietly to a little cottage in Devonshire to die.

Marston was now gone two months, and Dorricks' packet still remained unopened. After a short conference with Stephen, I decided upon breaking the seal. The reader will doubtless desire to see its contents, so I give the document, as I received it.

“ To Mr. George Allen,—

“ Stephen Dorricks sends you his confession, which he feels you may reasonably demand at his hands. He does so as an act of simple justice to a deeply-injured man ; not to evoke on his own behalf the pity and sympathy of a world which, from his childhood, he has despised.

“ To begin then !

“ I was born in the little village of Middleborough, a few miles from the great town of

Northampton, somewhere in the year 1817, so that I have now reached my twenty-eighth year. My father I never saw, and my mother was hurried off by pulmonary consumption before I could lisp her name. To distant relatives and warm friends I was indebted for food, clothing, and, in after years, a liberal education. A clever, gloomy, silent boy, avoiding the sports and amusements of those of my own age, sex, and condition, I was looked upon as a thing to be feared by children ; to be hated by men. My impenetrable reserve kept me aloof from all, frequently seeking the darkness and solitude of my own closet, when others rushed with a cry of joy from the schoolroom to the playground. They found pleasure in the hoop, the ball, or the kite ; I in books and my own thoughts. I was the first of my class, and took the 'honours' I gained with a thankless heart. They were my rights, and well I knew that my tutors and examiners would have kept them from me if they dared. To *them* I owed no

gratitude, and I was not mean enough to attempt any. The laurels I had won I put aside with a careless hand, and then, as they withered, rose up and gathered fresh ones. To excel in all things was my chief ambition ; to look down upon other boys of mean pretensions, my greatest pride. Books, sealed to others, were boldly opened by me, and their hidden stores of knowledge seized with a determined hand. With none did I share those treasures. Miser-like, they were clutched to my heart, and there they remained. And so I grew up, and at sixteen, was pronounced a youthful wonder. But my hard, cold, selfish nature, sadly detracted from the brilliancy of my achievements, and I became a boy to be respected—not loved ; but respect and love were only names with me. When seventeen I went to Oxford, and here fresh triumph awaited me. Silly Viscounts, and light-headed Marquises, with a royal noodle or two, competed with me, but I laughed at them, and bore off the prizes before their drowsy wondering

eyes. They were jealous of and envied me; but I liked their jealousy and their envy, for they showed that I was something.

“ ‘*Hate* me,’ said I, “if you will—you cannot *despise* me.’

“ I had two or three kindred spirits amongst those titled Oxonians; clear, cold, crafty boys, who had cut out for themselves a path in life, and were determined fearlessly to tread it. They were my only companions, and I took a real pleasure in their society. We read together, walked together, and carried on our plans together; we were a sort of ‘mutual benefit association,’ and each and all worked for the general good. We preyed upon the rich and thoughtless, who wished to be crammed for an examination, and were paid handsomely for ‘coaching’ them up their class. Those who did not deal liberally, usually had the satisfaction of seeing themselves well plucked, and sent home, after term, covered with shame and disgrace. Oxford was our *El Dorado*, and gold was to be had for the picking.

“ When I left Oxford it was with a heavy purse and a full determination to increase its weight by every means in my power. I looked round me, and saw that all the learned professions were stocked with young scions of the nobility, whose broad shoulders and empty heads would have eminently qualified them for coalheavers. But there they were, firmly blocking up the way, and there they would remain, till either promoted or pushed aside to make room for some more wealthy or influential candidate.

“ If I tried the bar, it was by no means clear that my Lord Tomnoddy, the weakness of whose intellect I never questioned at school or college, would not be a silk gownsman and a judge before me ; that if I looked to the church, the Honourable Septimus ‘ Go-asleep ’ might one day be my rector, and ultimately my diocesan ; and that if I took up the sword, Lord Viscount Dashaway, slightly imbecile, and wholly dissipated, might, after a mess dinner, put me under arrest for some fancied insult to him—my *commanding officer*. The

'stage,' to be sure, was still before me, but I had no love for it. The cold reality of the 'Behind the scenes' gave me an uncomfortable shiver, and I thought of how many threadbare coats were laid aside to give place to the gold and tinsel of the 'footlights.' Thousands of brilliant, high-souled men, I knew, had entered upon that profession, to retire in a few years, crushed, broken-hearted, and poverty-stricken, and lay themselves down in some quiet nook to die. You may tread upon the grass above them every day as you pass, but their names are *not* 'to be found upon the tombstones.' Poor, patient drudges! they live out their appointed time, and then find a nameless grave.

"One profession (and it *is* a profession) alone remained—that of a gambler. I embraced it; and in a gaming-house at Cheltenham first met Philip Marston. We became acquaintances; so I won his money and left him. It was some years before I saw him again: but of that by-and-bye.

"It is not to be supposed that, in a career like mine, any man can meet with continuous or

unqualified success. A turn of luck, and the man who is rich to-day may be penniless to-morrow, and end all his troubles, so far as this life is concerned, in the Seine or the Thames. I had many and bad reverses, and was often reduced to a state bordering on actual starvation, but never to hopeless despair. Long since I had counted the cost, and was prepared for drawbacks in every shape and form. On one occasion, having lost nearly every penny I possessed in the world, I found myself in Liverpool, friendless and unknown. The latter circumstance was rather favourable to me than otherwise, for having no money to try my fortune at the gaming-table, I determined upon becoming—what? a teacher of languages! A glowing advertisement in the morning papers; a change of name; a forged certificate of character and qualifications; a quiet, self-possessed, sanctimonious air, and I was a perfect success. Replies teemed in on all sides, and I had some difficulty in making a selection from the mass of letters I received. I lay by, however, eight or ten of the

most promising, and handed the remainder back to the clerk at the newspaper office, to be given to the first unsuccessful advertiser in my new profession he might chance to meet.

In a week I was comfortably installed in the house of a Mr. Hutton, a respectable coachbuilder, who had his establishment in Islington, and his residence at Waterloo, close to the seashore. His family consisted of himself, his daughter—a girl of seventeen—and two boys, twins, three years younger. That girl became in twelve months afterwards my wife, and is the same who interrupted the ceremony between Miss Roberts and myself. Being my wife, you will not, of course, expect me to do more than allude to her. She was a gentle, loving, virtuous woman, and as such, no helpmate for Stephen Dorricks. I tired of, and left her; started for Paris, and soon found myself in that gay capital, with a passport, a thousand pounds, and a good deal of downright knavery.

“ Here I met Marston, plying his calling with

some success. Again we played, and again I won. I half pitied him, for he was now a beggar; but one sees such beggars every day in Paris.

“I grew wealthy, and soon set up an establishment—that is, I took a house, furnished it neatly, and usually invited the rich and titled to my parties, and; contrived to send them away by daybreak very much lighter from their visit.

“One man I could never win from—a Captain Henri D’Auvergne, a one-eyed rascal; a Corsican by birth, and covered, with hair, decorations, and crosses of honour. This fellow boasted, in tolerable good English, of having seen much service, and had a voice strongly resembling distant thunder, or the booming of a whole park of his own artillery. I looked upon him as an imposter of the very shabbiest type (as such, indeed, he afterwards proved himself to be), but there was one fact quite apparent—that at the gaming-table he was my match. Seeing this we coalesced, and, like as at Oxford, worked together for our mutual advantage.

The ragamuffin was an incorrigible drunkard (an odd failing for a gambler, by the way), but nevertheless contrived, by some means or another, to make the acquaintance of many wealthy, and even titled families in Paris, and he introduced me wherever he went. At the house of a decayed marquis of great pretensions he was a welcome guest. This gentleman was very fond of a quiet game at *écarte*, and the captain (when sober) played it to perfection. I soon found that the scoundrel's whiskers and one eye (black) had made a decided impression upon the old aristocrat's eldest daughter; and as she had a hundred thousand francs in her own right, it occurred to me that he was playing his game to some purpose. This young lady had probably seen forty summers, and looked a little the worse for wear. She had a sister fifteen years younger, and as she possessed thirty thousand francs more, I determined to woo, and, if possible, win her. I borrowed, therefore, the name of an obscure Northamptonshire baronet,

and, as Sir Richard somebody or another, laid siege to her heart. In a little time the fortress yielded, and hand, heart, and fortune were declared to be my own. The marquis nodded approval, for the very name of an English baronet was enough for him.

“I at once determined upon bigamy. It was a bold step, but a necessary one to the accomplishment of my designs. To do this, however, my wife must believe me dead; and a mock duel, and an account of its fatal result inserted in the English papers, would have the desired effect.

“But some one must aid me,—a man reckless of consequences, and who only knows fear by name. Such a man is Marston. I will seek him.

“I found him in the garret of a mean-looking house, sitting in his shirt-sleeves, and coolly smoking his pipe. He was sober, and smelled strongly of onions.

“ ‘Marston,’ said I, after our first greeting, ‘do you want money?’ ”

“ ‘Do I want what?’ he asked, in a surly tone.

“ ‘Money.’

“ ‘Why, of course, I do. Who’s to give me any, I should like to know.’

“ ‘I!’

“ ‘You?’

“ ‘I!’

“ ‘Oh, you’re jesting, Dorricks; you win my money when I’ve got any, and then you come here to sport with me, It’s not fair. I’ll—’

“ ‘Believe me, I am not jesting,’ I interrupted.

“ ‘No! Are you going to give me any, then?’

“ ‘Yes! How much do you want?’

“ ‘Well, if you didn’t consider a couple of hundred too great a stretch on your part, I shouldn’t mind borrowing that sum for a little while.

“ ‘It’s yours?’

“ ‘Hem! Tell me what I’m to do for this?’ he inquired, suspiciously tossing up the purse into the

air, and catching it in his open palm as it fell ; ‘ to lure some poor devil to the gaming-table, or cut some successful rival’s throat. I’ll not do either.’

“ ‘ Be serious, Marston, and tell me, have you ever fought a duel ?’

“ ‘ Yes, two !’

“ ‘ You’ve a steady hand, and a quick eye ?’

“ ‘ I fancy so.’

“ ‘ Listen, then !’

“ ‘ Go on !’

“ ‘ I am about to marry !’

“ ‘ Oh !’

“ ‘ Don’t interrupt me. The lady is rich, beautiful, and accomplished, and the daughter of a marquis, who is able to make all our fortunes—yours included.’

“ ‘ Well, I don’t see,’ said Marston, after a slight pause, ‘ why the marquis, as you call him, should make *my* fortune ; but go on.’

“ ‘ There’s one, and only one obstacle to this marriage.’

“ ‘ And that is——’

“ ‘ That I’m married already.’

“ ‘ The devil!’ he exclaimed, in surprise, I never knew that before. What a deep fellow you are, to be sure! Married? Why did you leave your wife, then?’

“ ‘ Did I say I left her?’

“ ‘ No, no, certainly not; but come to the point.’

“ ‘ Well, then, you and I must fight a duel.’

“ ‘ I’ll be hanged if we do, though, till I know for what.’

“ ‘ Why for the £200 I’ve given you, of course. This duel that I speak of will differ in one particular from most duels — there will be no bullets in the pistols, and it will be only a duel in name. In a word, Marston, I must, to my present wife, at once and for ever be a dead man.’

“ ‘ Oh, I see; the affair is yours, and you have doubtless, good reasons for acting as you do; so tell me what part you want me to play.’

“ I briefly explained to him that, at a gambling-

house which I named, he was, on the following night, to insult me ; I was to demand satisfaction, which he refusing, a meeting was to be arranged for the next morning ; seconds were to be provided at once, and pistols loaded with powder only were to be used. At the first discharge, I was to fall ; to be carried away mortally wounded, and in a day or two after an account of my death would appear in the English prints.

“ Marston agreed to this, and I hurried off to find my gallant friend, leaving him comparatively rich and happy.

“ For a military man my hairy friend handled the pistols very awkwardly ; and I thought that his hand shook slightly as he proceeded to examine them.

“ At length, preliminaries being arranged, we were placed back to back ; the word was given ; two sharp reports rang out, and Marston, bounding high into the air, fell flat upon the earth, with a bullet-wound in his left side. My one-eyed rascal had done that for him by quietly dropping a piece

of lead into my pistol when our eyes were off him, lest, as he afterwards told me, he should at any time become troublesome.

“The ‘hero’ and myself now hurried away as fast as horse-flesh could carry us, leaving Marston and his friend sole occupants of the field.

“Our scheme was unsuccessful. We presented ourselves at the marquis’s that evening, only to have the one kicked out, and the other threatened with an equally summary ejection. They had learnt that very day that the ‘warrior’ was an English footman out of place, and, I presume, that I was looked upon as little better.

“Foiled, then, in this second attempt to catch an ‘heiress,’ I hurried back to England, and—you know the rest.

“Not quite, though.

“Jackson’s memory must, to some extent, be vindicated.

“He murdered Loader, it is true: but why? You shall learn, and in a few words.

“I was for some time aware that Mr. Roberts proposed making Loader a partner in the ‘firm,’ and I intended, in the event of his doing so, that that gentleman should not enjoy his new position very long. It would not at all have suited me, as Eveleen’s husband. Roberts could not live for ever, and at his death (and I felt that he would die suddenly) I should be sole master or nothing. Dorricks would share with no one.

“Jackson was half-witted and fond of gambling. I found this after a short conversation with him, and encouraged him in his propensity without appearing to do so. The fellow was reasonably educated and apt, and just the man to suit my purpose. Once in my power, and no slave would be more obedient to my will. I learnt from him that he needed money; that he had purloined various sums from time to time, both from Loader and Roberts, and that he feared, of all things, a discovery. I lent him £50, told him that he might one day be able to repay it with interest, and,

moreover, advised him to tell Loader what he had done, and to promise better things for the future. I also left my cheque-book in his way, as if by accident, and the temptation proving too great (as I knew it would), he forged my name for another fifty, got the money, and was now entirely in my power. I told him that I freely forgave him for what he had done, but that, unfortunately, I had, in an unguarded moment, mentioned the circumstance to Loader, and that I feared there was no real security for him so long as the old man lived. I could see a hellish light gleam in his eye as I spoke, and I felt that, at any moment, he was prepared to murder him.

“During all this time, I was perfectly well aware of your attachment to Eveleen; but as it interfered in no way with me, I did not concern myself about it. You did not, in the slightest degree, stand in my path. Had you done so, I would have removed you from it, as I would a dog. Whether you lived or died, therefore, made no difference to me. Nay, more: had I Eveleen’s

fortune, and a substantial interest in her father's business, I would willingly have surrendered her to any man. Loader was the only obstacle to my unlimited power and control, and that obstacle I had determined must be quickly got rid of.

"A word in Jackson's ear, and it was done.

" 'Jackson,' said I, the day I heard the deed of partnership was to be signed—'Jackson, to-morrow Loader will be your master, and, with the knowledge of your former good conduct, he will doubtless see sufficient reason to promote you when once he gets the reins in his hands.'

" 'That to-morrow will never come, though I hang for it,' muttered Jackson.

"I left him without another word, and troubled myself no further. It mattered not to me how Loader died; die he would, and that very night.

"Have I said enough? No.

“Of one trifle you would like to know something more.

“The lock of hair!

“It was burnt, and in my presence. I saw you take it from Mrs. Roberts's hands, and I smiled as I saw you; but how Jackson became possessed of it I know not. If you are at all curious on the point, and that your memory serves you, you will probably ask him at the last great day.

“Jackson in his dying moments, spared my reputation. He was bound by oath to do so.

“To enable you to account for the sudden change in Mr. Roberts's manner to you, I may state that that was my doing. Though I did not fear you as a rival, yet I thought that your presence, in the capacity of cashier, might be inconvenient; and so I told him of your affection for his daughter, and suggested your quiet removal.

“During the latter part of your incarceration, that daughter was a close prisoner to her room,

and hence she could not visit you as she did before. I suggested this likewise.

“You perceive, Mr. Allen, how candid I am !

“Should you have any desire to see the one-eyed Corsican, whose treachery so nearly cost your stepfather his life, he can be found in drab livery, any day, behind the carriage of my Lord—, of Piccadilly. He has divested himself of his hair and decorations ; speaks English with a thorough Cockney accent, and on the whole has become a tolerable Christian. Despite all this, if he be not hanged some fine morning, I’m singularly out in my calculations.

“And thus I have redeemed the promise I made o Marston.

“As for yourself, marry Eveleen Roberts, if you can ;—if you cannot, do the next best thing—secure a rich widow, and live comfortably for the remainder of your days.

“I have done ! Burn this packet or not, just as you may think proper. Perhaps in years to come

you would like to re-read it, in order to tell your children (should you have any) something of me ; and in such case you will preserve it. But do not print it ; do not give it the dignity of type ; it has no moral ; can answer no purpose, and its publication might, perhaps, serve to direct unnecessary attention to STEPHEN DORRICKS.'"

CHAPTER XIII.

MY MARRIAGE.

TWELVE months past and gone, and again Eveleen Roberts sits in the little summer-house of Tudor Lodge, in the Old Kent-road. She is dressed in deep mourning, and traces of recent suffering are on her face. Her golden hair hangs, as of old, upon her neck and bosom; a book is before her, and it needs only the crushed portrait of the wretched Dorricks to complete the picture.

I am reading for her his confession. She has a right to hear it, and I have no right to withhold it.

Tears are in her eyes, and pity, I know, is in her heart.

"Gifted, erring man," she murmurs, "how I grieve for him!"

"I have made the most diligent inquiry, Miss Roberts, but can learn nothing of him. I fear he is dead."

She shudders. I understand that shudder. A man who looks down a precipice, and sees the danger he has unwittingly escaped, shudders too.

"And so poor Mr. Rogers has been taken from us."

"Yes! he died, I might say, in my arms. You are aware, of course, that the Cannon-street house has been sold?"

"Quite; and I am glad of it. I do not think I should like to go there and see so many strange faces. But you?"

"I am rich now—at least moderately so—and I think of travelling for a year or so."

"And alone?"

"Yes!"

She looked up with a bright smile.

"George, you remember my last words in that

gloomy cell?—‘Eveleen Roberts prays for your peace and happiness.’ ”

“ I do ! God above bless you for them.”

“ Are you now happy ? ”

“ No ! ”

“ Why ! ”

“ I dare not tell you.”

“ What if I guessed it ? ”

“ Even then I could not confess.”

“ No ? ”

“ No ! ”

“ Poor George, I pity you.”

“ Pity me, Miss Roberts ! ”

“ Yes, pity you. You have happiness within your reach, and yet you will not put out your hand to take it.”

Her hand was outstretched towards me !

“ What can this mean ? ” I exclaimed, starting back. “ Miss Roberts—Eveleen—do not jest with me ! I have suffered much and long. Oh God ! *how* much, and *how* long ! And now—and now—oh, this hour of doubt and fear ! I—I—

dare say no more—imperfect—unworthy—all, all unworthy—still I am—”

“A fool! (excuse me for the compliment), not to have known what everybody for three long years suspected. What! you do not speak!—then I must. It is a leap-year, and I but avail myself of a woman’s privilege. Yes, George, travel to France, Italy, Germany, round the world if you will! but remember, you take me with you, for it ‘is not good for man to be alone.’”

And the dear head was pillowed upon my heart; and the dear arms—oh, how lovingly!—encircled me. And under that starlit sky, and with the memories of the past before me, I swore to be to her a husband and a father.

* * * * *

Two weddings in one day! A great event, truly. The papers duly chronicled them, and it is not too much to say that I am thankful to the papers.

The *Morning Post* was in raptures when describing the personal charms of the bride, and as

Mr. O'Leary read it at the breakfast-table loudly, sonorously, and with his old flourish, Mesdames Allen and Graham hung down their heads, looked confused, and softly murmured—"How silly!"

CHAPTER XIV.

DEATH OF STEPHEN DORRICKS.

“A FOREIGN letter, George!” said Eveleen, one morning, bounding suddenly into my study, where I sat reading the previous night’s debate in the “House;” “a foreign letter, George! and it bears the Montreal post-mark! Who can it be from?”

It was from Philip Marston. With trembling fingers I broke the seal and read:—

“Montreal, 4th July, 1851.

“DEAR GEORGE,—

I write to you because I am rich and prosperous. Fortune—don’t call her fickle jade—has smiled upon me; and Marston of Bishopsgate-street With-

out, and Marston of Cambridge House, Montreal, are no longer the same person. I have prospered,—prospered far beyond my deserts, and I do not act the hypocrite when I say that I am grateful for it. With you I know all is well, for I read, some years ago, in an English paper, of your marriage. I would have written at the time, and offered my congratulations, but that I was poor, and feared you might think I wanted to intrude my poverty upon you. I can now write without any danger of such a charge.

“And so you are happy at last—really and truly happy? By Jove, I’m glad of it! I’ve every reason to be proud of you, and you’ve every reason to be proud of your wife. Give her my respectful compliments, and say that I am now a new man. I have shaved off my moustache—but you needn’t tell her that—clipped my beard, put on a broad-brimmed, low-crowned hat, and look exactly what I am—a comfortable, well-to-do farmer and grazier. I have upwards of two hundred acres of excellent pasture land, and pigs

poultry, sheep, and horned cattle to no end. I keep eight men constantly employed, winter and summer, and work myself with the best of them. I dig, plough, sow, and reap during the day, and enjoy myself in the evening with a mug of cyder (now my favourite drink), and the conversation of any friend who may chance to drop in. At a moderate calculation, I am worth four thousand pounds in stock, and have as much more lying out at a fair interest. Pretty good that, for a six years' resident. I would ask you to come out here, were it not that you are so well off and happy at home. Poor old England!

"I suppose you heard of the death of Dorricks? Lest you should not I will give you the particulars presently.

"And this reminds me that I ought to explain the cause of my absence from England at the time that you were charged with the murder of Loader; and, as Dorricks doubtless told you, in his confession, of our acquaintance, it will not be necessary to allude to that. So much the better, for I am

anxious to deal as gently as possible with his memory.

“It was from unfortunate Jackson that I learnt of his (Dorricks) intended marriage with Miss Roberts—now, thank God, Mrs. Allen ; and I was on my way to America in search of his wife at the time of Loader’s murder. I knew that in Liverpool he abandoned that wife, and I determined upon discovering her if alive. To Liverpool I went, but found that she had sailed for New York eight or nine months previously. I could learn little of her, save that she had arrived in that city safely, and intended, in all probability, passing the remainder of her days there. She had spent nearly every penny she possessed, my informant told me, in endeavouring to discover her husband ! but at length, despairing and broken-hearted, she sank down upon, what people at the time believed to be, her death-bed. During her illness a friend saw an account in one of the London papers of his having fallen in a duel somewhere near Paris, and by common consent the

paper was destroyed, and she, poor thing, kept in ignorance of his supposed fate. The knowledge of it, all foresaw, would have killed her. It was a long time before she was sufficiently recovered to move about, and then, in order to get her out of the country, and in the hope that change of scene would bring about renewed health, a trip to New York was suggested, as the most likely of all places in which to find her husband. With a cry of joy, she rose up and prepared to go. The poor, confiding creature had become young again, and the thought of once more holding him to her heart brought back the colour to her cheek and the light to her eye. For Armytage she would have begged the world over.

“ ‘Can you describe her?’ I asked of the woman who supplied me with this information.

“ ‘One of the loveliest cratures you ever sat eyes upon,’ was the reply.

“ But this was too vague, so I pressed for a closer and more accurate description.

“She looked suspiciously at me, and asked why I was so anxious about her?”

“I told her that my motive was a good one, being no less than that of restoring to her her husband, who, I assured her, was no more dead than myself.

“‘Alive!’ exclaimed the old lady, in astonishment. ‘Mother of glory, can it be possible?’

“‘It is true, my dear madam,’ I replied.

“‘But didn’t we see an account of his death in the papers?’

“‘You did; but that account was supplied by himself, for the express purpose of getting rid of his wife.

“‘There’s villyany for you!’ exclaimed the woman (who, by the way, was from the same country as your friend, O’Leary), clapping her hands, and looking horrified. ‘To say that she who would put her hands under the soles of his feet any day in the year, should be trayed that way? Oh, the black-hearted wretch!’

“‘I must find her quickly, if at all,’ I con-

tinued ; ' for the wretch, as you term him is about to marry a young lady of great wealth and beauty.'

" ' Is it Armytage ? ' she asked, half incredulously.

" ' Yes, Armytage, or Dorricks, or whatever you choose to call him.'

" ' The Lord keep us from all hurt and harm, but he was the unlooky bird,' said the woman, crossing herself devoutly.

" ' Now, my old friend, since you know of my good intentions with reference to Mrs. Armytage, will you kindly favour me with her age, dress, precise appearance, and any other peculiarity by which she might be known to a stranger.'

" ' That would take too long, and you'd be likely to forget it,' she replied, after a little consideration ; ' but I'll tell you what I'll do. Mrs. Armytage, poor soul, was very short of money going away, having only just what paid her passage, so she pledged a picture of herself—a rare likeness—for ten shillings in Whitechapel ;

and as I have the ticket, if you don't mind the cost, I'll release it for you, and then, with that in your pocket, you'd know her amongst ten thousand.'

"I gave the woman a sovereign, telling her to fetch the picture instantly, and to keep the change for her trouble. She did both, and I left her soon afterwards, overwhelmed with prayers and thanks.

"I now started for New York, where I arrived after a tedious passage of nearly four weeks, and pursued my inquiries for some days without success. I first began with the shipping agents, then with the boatmen, next the bakers, butchers, greengrocers, &c., but in vain. None knew a Mrs. Armytage, or any lady whose appearance at all corresponded with that of the portrait. I tried advertisements in the papers with no better result. I would have applied to the police, but feared that such a step might compromise her or myself. Weary and dejected I wandered about, picture in hand, comparing it

with the features of every woman I chanced to meet. All, all in vain.

“Jaded and foot sore, I one evening turned into a dingy looking public-house, at the corner of the Fourteenth-street, and throwing myself into a seat, called for something to drink. I had not sat there many minutes, when a young woman with soft brown hair, and very retiring, modest demeanour, entered and timidly approached a large brandy-faced woman, who stood behind the counter, eating a sandwich, and washing it down with some genuine stout. One glance satisfied me that she was the person I was in search of. A slight, delicate, and singularly pretty-looking girl, of scarcely two and twenty, with mild blue eyes, and a sad, melancholy expression of face. Though the weather was cold, she was but lightly clad, and I saw more than one hole in her thin, well-worn shawl. She carried a paper parcel in her hand, and this, with a trembling, nervous hand, she laid before the portly landlady.

“ ‘ Please, ma’am, here are the shirts,’ she said, in a low, faltering voice.

“ Mrs. Bulster (for so she was called) deliberately finished her supper, wiped her lips with the corner of her apron, and then, carelessly taking up the parcel, said very pompously,—‘ That’ll do ; I haven’t time to look at them, now. Call again !’

“ With a weary, heavy sigh, that seemed to come from out the depths of her poor, broken heart, Mrs. Armytage turned to go. At the door she paused, and I could see that there was a sharp struggle going on within her. It did not last long, for with another sigh she again approached the counter.

“ ‘ Would it be too much, ma’am — she began.

“ ‘ Now, you’ve had your answer, young woman,’ said Mrs. Bulster, as she turned away.

“ Oh, how mornfully appealing was that white, upturned face !

“There was another struggle.

“ ‘If the child weren’t so ill, ma’am, I wouldn’t think of—’

“ ‘Here, James,’ roared the brute to a waiter with a very dirty napkin, who was engaged at that moment in the pleasing occupation of scratching his equally dirty head; ‘here, James; show that person the door. ’pon my word, a pretty pass we’re coming to, when the likes of her stands to chop logic with a respectable tavern keeper, who has paid her rent and taxes regularly for the last thirty years. I’ll take care she never drives a needle for me again, the forward hussy.

“Another sob burst from the poor girl’s labouring breast, as drawing her shawl tightly around her, she walked out without another word or look.

“I followed at some distance, so as not to attract her attention. It was now bitterly cold, and the snow was falling fast. But neither

cold nor snow was heeded, as with bowed head she walked slowly, wearily on.

“I darted into a shop, procured a bottle of wine, and emerged just in time to catch a glimpse of her figure as it passed through the doorway of a wretchedly mean, tumble-down-looking house. I waited a few moments and then followed, groping my way up the narrow, dirty, dilapidated staircase, at a positive risk to life and limb. When the crazy balusters had ceased to creak, I knew she had gained the top, for, of course, she lived in the back garret—where else? When I reached the open door, I paused and looked in. There was neither fire nor light, and the damp night air had begun to fill the room. She had sunk upon her knees on entering, and in earnest, heartfelt tones poured out her soul to God. Two persons were the burthen of her prayer—her child and the idolised Armytage.

“‘Great heavens!’ I exclaimed, aloud; ‘how she still loves that man.’

“She rose with a start and a scream.

“ ‘Do not be alarmed, madam,’ I said, advancing into the room.

“ ‘Who are you?’ she asked, in a low, frightened voice.

“ ‘A friend—a true and sincere one.’

“ ‘Alas! I have no friends, sir; I am poor and helpless.’

“ ‘Mrs. Armytage, I—’

“ ‘You know me, then?’ she interrupted, hastily.

“ ‘I do, and have come all the way from England to seek you.’

“ ‘From England? Poor, dear happy England, why did I ever leave you?’

“ ‘Have you a light, Mrs. Armytage?’

“ ‘Alas! no, sir.’

“ ‘I will fetch one, then. Do not fear me. I mean you nothing but good.’

“ ‘I half tumbled down the stairs, gained the street, purchased a candle, some bread, and a little cooked meat, and then groped my way back again. Having lighted the candle with a match,

I placed the provisions (at which a little girl about three years old looked eagerly) and wine upon the table, and dragging it towards her, begged her to eat.

“She looked at me earnestly, but did not move.

“‘Come, I will set you the example,’ said I, filling out and drinking a glass of wine as I spoke.

“‘You have come from England, sir, and in search of me?’ she questioned, still standing in the centre of the room.

“‘I did. Now, do sit down.’

“‘How did you find me, sir?’

“‘I saw you in a tavern, half an hour ago.’

“‘You witnessed my humiliation, then?’

“‘Yes, yes! but, pray, do not speak of that now. Mrs. Armytage, I have news for you.’

“She looked pale and anxious, but said nothing.

“‘News that I have crossed the water to bring. Shall I tell it you?’

“‘Yes,’ and she made an imploring gesture.

“‘Can you bear it? Are you prepared?’

“ ‘Yes ; go on, sir, for mercy’s sake.’

“ ‘It concerns one one who is very dear to you—whom you value more than life.’

“ ‘Do not hesitate, sir. I am calm—collected. This friend is—?’

“ ‘Your husband—Stephen Armytage.’

“ ‘With a loud cry she fell forward upon the table.

“ ‘I raised her, moistened her lips and forehead, chafed her cold, pulseless fingers, and tried to revive her by every means in my power. The child clung to her, pale, trembling, and terrified, regarding me all the while with an earnestness that puzzled me. In a little time she recovered.

“ ‘What is your name, sir, and where is my husband?’ were her first questions.

“ ‘I told her.

“ ‘Did he send for me, then?’

“ ‘Heaven forgive me, I answered, ‘Yes.’

“ ‘Poor, confiding creature, she believed me, and would willingly have gone round the world with

me, provided, in the end, she found shelter in the arms of Dorricks. I practised this deception upon her, because I saw plainly that if made aware of the true state of affairs, all that was earthly would not have induced her to appear against him. There was nothing left, therefore, but to counterfeit.

“I parted from her that night with the understanding that she would return with me to England by the first vessel ready to start. Before I went to bed I scrawled a few lines to you, and posted it next morning. A fortnight from that day, with her child by the hand, she stepped with me on board the ‘Scotia.’

“When we reached Liverpool, it wanted but two days of that appointed for Dorricks’ marriage, so that not a moment was to be lost in reaching London. We did reach it, and with what result you already know.

“I have no doubt that Dorricks informed you of the plot laid for my destruction when at Paris. I have reason to know that he was no party to it—

that, in fact, it was hatched without his consent, or even knowledge. The scoundrel who planned it, and tried to carry it out, is now, I understand, in London, shaved and respectable.

“ Unfortunate Dorricks ! villain, as he was, his death was a terrible one.

“ I left England partly because I feared my staying there might affect your interests, and partly because I thought the time had come when I should endeavour by a life of honest industry to atone in some measure for the past. But I took care that Dorricks should start first, and I never lost sight of him, till I saw him, with his wife and child, steam out from Dover for Calais.

“ When I got here with that £500 which you lent me—and which I now return—I looked round for a safe and eligible investment. At the moment none presented itself. I had arrived at an unfortunate period of the year, when provisions were high, business was at a standstill, and thousands of tradesmen and artisans lounging idly about the streets, ragged, wretched, and starving.

Add to this the failure of several commercial houses, throwing hundreds out of employment, to swell still further the ranks of pauperdom ! and I think that you will admit that my immediate prospects were none of the most promising. But, as the Irish say, ‘ there’s luck in leisure,’ and I have lived long enough to experience the truth of the adage.

“ Eighteen months rolled over, and everything began to look up. A good harvest followed an unusually bad one, and skilled agriculturalists, as well as farm labourers, found ready employment. Trade, too, revived, and the strokes of the hammer and the sound of the anvil were once more heard. Now was my time, I bought a piece of marshy land for a mere trifle, and set to work at it with a will. I got two or three stout, able-bodied fellows, to assist me, and by dint of hard work and perseverance, succeeded in reclaiming some thirty or forty acres, and converting them into good, profitable pasture land. I then stocked it, but moderately, for I was determined to act in all things with pru-

dence and caution. Here was a change, you will say—Marston the gambler absorbed in Marston the farmer—but so it was. It was three years before I saw the fruits of my labour, and then everything began to prosper beyond my hopes. Pigs, sheep, and oxen were bought, fed, fattened, and sold, and everywhere they gained a ready market. Horses I did not find so profitable, owing to a peculiar disease breaking out among them at the time, so I kept only a sufficient number for farming purposes. Others who adopted a different plan, suffered severely for their temerity.

“I now thought of building a house, for hitherto I had contented myself with a little log-hut in the marsh; and a good, substantial, well-built edifice soon reared its stony front. I call it Cambridge House; but it would sadly puzzle you to find anything ducal about it—strength, not beauty, is its pre-eminent characteristic.

“And this brings me to the fourth year of my voluntary exile.

“About this time Dorricks appeared suddenly in Montreal.

“He had spent those four years in France and Germany, but was obliged to quit the latter country for reasons that he did not mention. I told him of my success, and offered to give him a ‘lift;’ but he declined the offer, and left me without saying anything about his future plans and prospects. I learnt his address, however, and determined upon seeing him again as soon as possible.

“Five or six weeks elapsed before I could carry out my intention, and I then found him in a small house situated in one of the most unfrequented streets of the city. His wife received me at the door with a welcome smile, and I could see that she felt truly happy. He was reading a work on metaphysics when I entered, and he looked up from it with a quiet smile.

“‘This is kind of you, Marston!’ said he, putting down his book and handing me a chair. , I have hardly deserved it from you.’

“ ‘Don’t say a word about that,’ I replied ;
‘but tell me of your plans.’

He shook his head.

“ ‘My dear fellow, you will wonder when I tell
you that I have none.’

“ ‘None?’

“ ‘Positively none.’

“ ‘But surely you have your wife and child to
think of.’

“ ‘They will be provided for in the event of my
death. How goes on affairs in the old country?’

“ ‘I should rather ask that question of you
who have been there so recently.’

“ ‘True ; but I have lived in a dream for the
last four years. Marston, do you believe that
there is *material* fire in hell?’

“ ‘No!’ said I, bluntly.

“ ‘I do. You remember that passage, ‘the
smoke of their torments ascendeth up for ever and
ever.’ That ‘for ever,’ Marston, is a long time.
But, tell me, what about Allen?’

“ ‘He married Miss Roberts twelve months or so after you left England.’

“ ‘I am glad of it. Poor Roberts himself followed Loader quickly enough.’

“ ‘He did.’

“ ‘In that world of spirits they talked, I suppose, of all my wickedness here below.’

“ ‘They have other subjects for conversation,’ said I, disliking to dwell upon such a topic.

“ ‘Ah, perhaps so,’ he returned, quietly; ‘it is very likely they have—very likely, indeed. Now, here is a book well calculated to unsettle a man’s faith in our good old orthodox creed. Will you read it?’

“ ‘Not I.’

“ ‘I think you are right. The book is clever; but it seems to me as if the writer were mad. His style is convincing—strongly convincing, I should say—and yet he himself is the veriest slave to a thousand doubts and fears.’

“ ‘Laugh at him and them, Dorricks.’

“ ‘ Whilst I can ; when I cannot, I shall cover my face, like the Romans of old, and die like a man.—Bah !’ he added, with a hoarse laugh, ‘ I’m getting old and turning driveller ; thirty, from this very day, if my memory serves me.’

“ ‘ Still young,’ I urged ; ‘ young enough for anything.’

“ ‘ Marston, will you promise me one thing ?’

“ ‘ Certainly !’

“ ‘ Should I die soon—and that is not very improbable—will you see my wife back to England ?’

“ ‘ I will, though I were to accompany her there myself.’

“ ‘ Thank you ! As for me, give me a Christian burial, if possible ; *it looks respectable.*’

“ ‘ You say your wife will be provided for. In what way ?’

“ ‘ Three thousand pounds were lodged to her credit in the Bank of England two years ago by a dying brother, but with this special proviso, ‘ that

not one penny of the principal or interest was to be available whilst *I* lived.'

" 'A very cruel and unnatural proviso, too,' I muttered.

" 'A very necessary one, Phil. ; but she is the most unselfish of her sex, and the arrangement pains her beyond expression. Would to God that she had met with one more capable of appreciating her worth !'

" 'She loves you, Dorricks, dearly.'

" 'Better, a thousand times, that she had never known love, save in name, since the object of it is Stephen Dorricks. Poor, poor girl ! too late has she become dear to me. Would you believe it, Marston, that even at the eleventh hour I have learnt to love her ? And were I not accursed of God and man, I might yet be happy. But I tire you.'

" 'No, Dorricks ; I assure you, no.'

" 'Has Allen any children ?' he asked, abruptly.

“ ‘I do not know. I have not heard from him since I left England.’

“ ‘I have a child,’ said he, speaking in low, smothered tones. ‘Heaven only knows what will become of her. If she be handsome like her mother, she may one day become——. God—man!’ he exclaimed, starting to his feet and striking his forehead with his clenched fist, ‘I cannot bear to think of it!’

“To you, who knew Dorricks well, I need not say that his self-control was at all times a thing to wonder at, and you will not marvel, therefore, when I say, that his having lost it under any circumstance, however trying, astonished me. He quickly recovered it, however, and seating himself, continued—

“ ‘You smile at my weakness? Well, be it so. We all have our weaknesses, whether we admit it or no; and my weakness is that poor child.’

“His wife now entered, leading by the hand a sweet little girl of about seven years old. With a

cry of joy she bounded into his arms, and laid her little head upon his breast.

“He then appeared to fall into a reverie, from which, as it lasted for nearly an hour, I was forced to rouse him.

“‘Stephen,’ said I, laying my hand upon his shoulder; but he did not answer me. I shook him, and he looked up. ‘Farewell, lad! I must be going. I’ve a good five miles’ ride before me, and the wind’s getting round to the rainy point, I see.’

“‘Good-bye!’ he replied, grasping my hand,’ but not relinquishing his hold of the child. Should we never meet again, remember your promise.’

“‘Never? I hope to see you in a day or two,’ I replied.

“‘In a day or two?’ he repeated with a half shudder; ‘perhaps!’

“‘He’s dull to-night, Mr. Marston,’ said the poor wife, looking anxiously at him.

“‘It will wear away before the night has passed,’ he returned, with a melancholy smile. ‘To-morrow, old friend, you will wonder at the change.’

“And as the shadows of night began to darken the room, I left him with his angel child slumbering peacefully in his arms, never again to behold him in life.

“Prophetic Dorricks.

“The next morning on taking up the *Montreal News*, I was startled by the following:—

“‘SHOCKING SUICIDE —Early this morning the neighbourhood of —— was thrown into a state of consternation by the announcement that a stranger, name unknown, but supposed to be an Englishman, had committed suicide under—’

“I did not read another syllable, but starting up, seized my hat, and vaulting upon my horse, dashed at a furious pace into the city, and up to the door of the house where Dorricks lodged.

“It was as I feared. The corpse of the wretched man lay extended upon the floor, rigid,

and nearly bloodless; his eyes closed, his long white hands slightly clasped above his head, and a smile, half triumph, half scorn, fixed in the rigidity of death, upon every feature of that well-known face. I looked for the instrument with which he had committed destruction, and found it a little distance from the body, covered with clotted gore—an *ordinary steel-barrelled pen*. Poor fellow! with that very pen, what a blessing might he have proved to himself and his race!

“I learnt that after I left on that memorable night, he tenderly kissed his wife and child, and begged of them to retire to rest, as he purposed sitting up writing till a late hour. No idea of suicide entered the poor woman’s head, and even if it had, there was no weapon in the room which he could turn against himself. But Dorricks was not a man to be balked. And having once determined upon death, his own ingenuity supplied the weapon.

“When found by his wife, he was half reclining in his chair, cold and stiff; a large steel-barrelled

pen, with which he had been writing, driven right into his heart. A small pencil-mark was found nearly in the centre of the chest, between the ribs, as if to denote the fatal spot, and upon this he appears to have placed the nib or point of the pen, and with the extremity of the wooden handle against the table, pressed and pressed till both could go no further. Death must have been almost instantaneous and painless, for his features were as calm and composed as if he had just sunk into a gentle sleep.

“His object in destroying himself was manifest from a few lines which lay upon the table, traced by the now bloody pen. It was to enable his wife and child to claim the money bequeathed to them, and which was hampered by such conditions.

“And thus perished Stephen Dorricks.

“His wife did not long survive him, and in less than two months I had laid her in the same grave.

“His child is with me, and with me she shall remain. The £3000 in the Bank of England may one day be useful to her as a marriage portion.

“For myself, I hope to die in the old country, and to lay my bones beside your mother’s. You gave me your promise years ago in ‘The Shore-ditch,’ and I know you will see that promise fulfilled.

“One word more, and I have done. Name your next boy after me, if you do not consider that name entirely disgraced, and when he grows up, let him consider himself my heir.

“PHILIP MARSTON.”

And I have done so ; for at this moment there sits a little fair-haired, blue-eyed boy before me, half-blinded with sleep, who has been helping me all day to copy this manuscript, and his name is PHILIP MARSTON ALLEN.

THE END.





